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THE MODERN SCHOOLMAN

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THE MODERN SCHOOLMAN

A Quarterly Journal of Philosophy

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THE EDITORS

KANTIANISM and the MODERN MIND

A Symposium; Part II

SENTIMENTAL FIDEISM

An Introduction

A conversation taken from the climax of a recent best seller¹ based on the present war sets forth in all its starkness the position of the sentimental fideist:

"I want to make you understand one thing. I see you as a symbol of your age. You're a product of the age of reason—not the age of faith. Because you have no intellectual belief in a hereafter, you deny yourself the lifelong comfort of faith in the soul's immortality."

"Do you mean that you'd have us have faith in a thing when our reason tells us we can't believe in it?"

"Yes."

"Do you believe in the soul and the hereafter—heaven, hell, God's throne?"

"I do not believe intellectually in them, and yet I have faith in them. Any fool can have faith in what reason tells him is certain. Faith is the quality of believing beyond reason."

"Remember that—and when the world has faith again—so many troubles will vanish and problems be solved. Communism, Fascism, these are mere intellectual conclusions. But conclusions of faith will solve what these cannot. That's all you are looking for now. You're looking for something—something—in which to have faith. You're trying to find it by intellectual processes—and that's what the world is doing."

"Don't think, my boy. Feel! Consult your feelings, not your reasonings. If you do—your problem will be over. You'll—you'll go back to your regiment or post or whatever it is in the army."

The book is a best seller, and the exposé of this sentimental position is generally accepted as strong and inspiring enough to bear the tremendous weight of a highly dramatic story of great human passion. Its force turns back a disillusioned deserter to his duty and an heroic death. This, I think, is highly significant. It indicates the great depth and almost universal extent to which this substitution of feeling for philosophical and religious thought has permeated the modern American and English mind.

The doctrine of fideism was conceived in despair, a despair in the capacity of the human intellect to arrive at certain knowledge of God and suprasensible reality. It is founded upon, and is a development of the agnosticism of Kant, who destroyed, at least to the satisfaction of Emmanuel Kant, the validity of the speculative reason for the apprehension of all that is not sensible phenomena. Such destruction he accomplished by an argument whose conclusion destroys the

¹Eric Knight, *This Above All* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1941).

premises upon which it is founded, and by antimonies which confuse that belongs to being as sensible with that which is proper to being as being.

But its roots go even deeper into history. William of Occam, whose nominalism virtually destroyed all universal—and hence scientific—philosophical and religious knowledge, maintained that God could be known with certitude, not by the speculative intellect, but by a kind of faith or sense. He thus sowed the seeds of agnosticism, seeds which at that time, it is true, were not fully to take root, but which were nevertheless to live and develop somewhat in the thought of the Renaissance Scholastics. For it can not be denied that Occam exerted a great influence upon these men, not a few of whom cast a more than friendly glance at his nominalistic philosophy. But Luther perhaps laid a more firm foundation for this agnosticism with his doctrine of the total depravity of our nature and the essential change of our intellect. Furthermore, by his doctrine of private interpretation of the word of God, he reduced truth to a purely subjective status, subordinated to the good of the individual. Since he changed *intellectual* faith (the assent of the mind to the truth of a proposition on the authority of God revealing) into *fiducial faith* (assent arising from an act of the will or sensitive appetite), he substituted volitionalism and sentimentalism for intellectualism.

This religious foundation gradually developed until philosophically it culminated in the agnosticism and moralism of Emmanuel Kant. He attempted, as we said above, to destroy the capacity of the speculative intellect for all except sensible phenomena. Do not say, however, that there is no God. We need, pious Kant exclaims, a God: my moral sense of duty demands a God. Hence God is. A bit of wishful thinking, I should say.

But without the intellect, the will which is a blind faculty, cannot long be distinguished from the sensitive appetite, and volitionalism quickly degenerates into sentimentalism. Sentimentalism is the substitution of a blind sensitive instinct for intellectual knowledge. According to the sentimentalist, faith is a vague sense by which we feel that those things which are beyond the power of our intellect—or even opposed to it—are somehow right and good, and that “spiritual values,” although scientifically not true, somehow influence our lives and enable us to reach life’s goal. Although we know that such things are non-existent, our very nature demands that we feel they exist.

J. J. Rousseau might be called the father of modern sentimental fideism. Although according to him religious truths are necessary, they pertain not to the intellect, but to an interior pious sense. A great number of Protestants and all the liberal Protestants are his devoted followers. Jacobi distinguished the intellect which understands reasons from the apprehensive faculty which grasps supra-

sensible reality; this faculty he placed in the sensitive appetite. Reid placed faith in a blind necessity of human nature which impels man to admit certain truths, which necessity is expressed in common sense of the common experience of the race. This doctrine is followed in its own way by Bergsonians like Le Roy, who would have us experience internally the immanent law of universal progress, especially of human progress, in which we find God; or like James, who bids us find God in the intimate sense we have of some one greater than ourselves. In this procession we find, too, the symbolo-fideists, headed by men like Sabatier, who postulate faith as an internal disposition and subjective exigency. The latest exponents of this fideism and sentimentalism, the Modernists under the leadership of Loisy and Tyrrel, are radical agnostics in their claim that all metaphysical demonstration of the existence of God leads to atheism. They substitute for reason a vital immanence. Religion, according to them, and the knowledge of God is a necessity of nature and consists of an impulse in an intimate sense faculty. Arising from the subconscious, such an impulse is unconscious and in it is perceived, as its object and intimate cause, the divine reality itself.

We have made these few considerations by way of introduction to point out at least one element which most modern philosophies have in common: an exaggerated emphasis on feeling and emotion. Positivism and Pragmatism bear, as we shall see, the unmistakable marks of such a stress. And Bergsonism, in spite of its not few merits, has at least this similarity to those systems in the agnosticism from which it cannot free itself. It is, then, important and timely to have considered the sentimental agnosticism which rules the modern mind. For only sentimentalism can explain the inconsistent logic of the American who denounces in season and out of season that philosophy which claims that one nation has the right to growth and prosperity and domination at the expense of the life of one or all other nations—yet he himself practices birth control on the score that it is better to have one child with every advantage, even if others are to be deprived of life. Or the inconsistency of one who cries out in indignation at the breaking of sacred treaties out of expediency—yet he himself thinks naught of divorce, the breaking of life's most sacred contract. A sentimentalist thinks with his muscles, he is subjective, his criterion is always self and self-interest. That is the law of the jungle. As long as it is the law of man there can be no peace, as there can be no peace in the jungle. Until intellectualism is once again enthroned as queen of human thought, there can be no lasting peace for man.

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AUGUSTE COMTE AND POSITIVISM

"We are compelled to recognize almost everywhere in the present century the underlying spirit of his doctrine. And not only the philosophies but the historical and scientific work and even the romance and the art of our times are deeply permeated by this spirit."¹ Thus does Lévy-Bruhl conclude his enthusiastic account of the Positivism of Auguste Comte. Of a truth, it is not difficult to see that the whole atmosphere of the so-called scientific world is fairly charged with positivistic ideas. Pick up the text-books used in schools and colleges today, and you will find them shot through with positivism. Here in America especially the ideas of Dewey have become stock-in-trade, and Dewey certainly can be classed as a naturalist and positivist.² No doubt it was the prevalence of this positivistic spirit in our American education which Walter Lippmann had in mind, when he wrote:

In the American schools and colleges we have gone very far toward abandoning the idea that an education should be grounded upon the deliberate training of the mind and upon a discipline in the aiming of moral choices. . . . In this system men learn to reach conclusions on practical issues without being subject to the discipline of a moral education.³

History, too, has been so impregnated with Positivism that many (not all, thank Heaven) otherwise reputable historians have turned their science into a congeries of facts gathered from every possible source. Professor Hocking of Harvard does not mince matters in his splendid analysis of the condition of the sciences today. After deploring the disastrous results which follow from the fact that so many philosophers and scientists were ashamed of the parents who begot them, i.e., of their medieval background, he goes on to say that historians have simply neglected to take account of "medieval piety" as a possible source of all the great innovations in science, law, and culture. Then he continues:

¹ Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, *History of Modern Philosophy in France*, Transl., (Chicago: Open Court Publishing Co., 1924), p. 396.

² "Mr. Dewey's philosophy of education has spread like a plague through the American normal schools and schools of education." William J. McGucken, *The Catholic Way In Education*, (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1933), pp. 22-23.

Cf. also Geoffrey O'Connell, *Naturalism In American Education*, (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America, 1936), pp. 81-107.

³ Walter Lippman, "Today and Tomorrow," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, July 6, 1942.

The reason is, strangely enough, the historian's scientific conscience. This conscience, during the 19th century, became enormously careful about its "facts": history became a vast technique for the sifting of evidence, and the exclusion of all but verifiable facts. The only difficulty with this procedure is that the important facts of history are never verifiable; for they take place in the mind. They have to do with the passions and motives of men, which no one ever sees. The real historical deeds are decisions, not the consequent movements of arms and legs.⁴

Things would be bad enough, if this positivistic spirit were confined to the natural sciences, to Education and History, but the fact is that these ideas have filtered into the spheres of Ethics and Statecraft, and they more than anything else have been responsible for the power politics so wide-spread today. Here again Professor Hocking traces back to Positivism the havoc wrought in the field of Law and Human Rights. If we deprive rights and duties of their metaphysical ground, and try to derive them from utility or enjoyment,

The way is prepared for those legalists of today who base law on the power of the lawgiver: Law is the will of the strongest force in the community when that force assumes authority. There is no ethical criterion for a good law as distinct from a bad one. Law is positive and is to be studied as a natural fact. If anyone were so absurd as to ask what his rights are within a given state, the answer would be that he has whatever liberties are accorded to him by actual rulers. . . . International law on such terms is a mirage.⁵

Of course, this brand of power politics is as old as the fall of man, and it was being put in practice centuries before Positivism came into being as a separate science.⁶ But it has been reserved as the special privilege of Positivism to go the whole way; and if it succeeds, we may be sure that its mailed fist will crush out every vestige of the democratic ideal.

NATURE AND MEANING OF POSITIVISM

The study of Positivism is one of no little practical value and interest in the present day, as was made manifest in the preceding introductory remarks. But before proceeding, it seems good to investigate the nature and meaning of positivistic philosophy, which sprang Minerva-like from the brain of Auguste Comte. John Stuart Mill, an ardent admirer of Comte, gives us a worthy description of the Positive Method in his *A System of Logic*:

⁴ William Ernest Hocking, "What Man Can Make of Man," *Fortune*, February, 1942, p. 136.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 140.

⁶ Thus Plato in his *Gorgias*, (cf. esp. 470-510), puts the dictator's arguments in the mouths of Polus and Callicles: and even the *Politics* of Aristotle, (esp. Book V, as arranged by Bekker, 1301-1316), is supposed to have given Machiavelli some of the leading ideas of his *Il Principe*.

We have no knowledge of anything but phenomena; and our knowledge of phenomena is relative, not absolute. We know not the essence nor the real mode of production of any fact, but only its relations to other facts in the way of succession or similitude. These relations are constant, i.e., always the same in the same circumstances. The constant resemblances which link phenomena together, and the constant sequences which unite them as antecedent and consequent, are termed their laws. All phenomena without exception are governed by invariable laws, with which no volitions, either natural or supernatural, interfere. The essential nature of phenomena and their ultimate causes, whether efficient or final, are unknown and inscrutable to us.⁷

In other words, Positivism would have us restrict our knowledge to phenomena and their laws, and hence the task of Philosophy is merely to bind the results of the positive sciences together into a kind of unified *Weltanschauung*. This is the only Philosophy, its espousers claim, worthy of the name, for according to them it alone is scientific, it alone is based on true scientific method—*observation*. And since Positive Philosophy takes the whole field of exact knowledge as its province, it renders all other systems superfluous. Representing the full-grown maturity of the human mind, it is destined to supersede all others. It has fallen heir to all the philosophies and religions that have gone before; hence, it is sure to make ever constant progress. Comte himself thus describes his brain-child:

All our western languages agree in effect in indicating by the word "positive" and its derivatives the two attributes of reality and utility, of which the combination would suffice by itself to define from henceforth the true philosophical spirit. This at bottom cannot be anything else than good common sense generalized and systematized. This same term recalls also throughout the West the qualities of certitude and precision, by which modern reason is profoundly distinguished from the ancient. . . . When the Western world shall have sensed this last connection, no less real than the preceding even though more concealed, positive will become inseparable from the relative, just as today it is inseparable from the organic, the precise, the certain, the useful and the real.⁸

Positive Philosophy, then, is supposed to be *real*, for it restricts itself to the discovery of the facts which our sense faculties can grasp. Consequently, it does away with every effort to get at causes, whether efficient or final, and at the essences of things. Ferret out, the Positivist commands us, the unchangeable laws that govern phenomena in their relations of succession and similarity, and set aside all useless questions. Then man can foresee future events by the

⁷ John Stuart Mill, *A System of Logic*, Book II.

Cf. also G. Cantecar's description of Positivism in his *Comte* (Paris: Librairie Mellottée, n.d.). He says, "Positivism consists in a pronounced aversion for any speculation that goes beyond experience; in an exclusive taste for the real, the solid and the useful, joined to this conviction that the only objects of observation, and in particular sensible observation, merit these qualifications." pp. 9-10. (Writer's translation).

⁸ Auguste Comte, *Système de politique positive*, (Paris: 1853), I, p. 57.

discovery of the unchangeable laws that govern the occurrence of natural phenomena. Again, Positivism is *precise*, in that it would have us exclude from genuine science all that is vague and nebulous; it insists only on what can be proven.⁹ Consequently, everything else must be ruled out of the legitimate sphere of scientific knowledge. Further still, Positivism is *relative*, i.e., it would have us give up all quest for the absolute, which after all is merely an *ignis fatuus* leading simple souls into disaster. According to it there are no absolutes; and the sooner we give up looking for them, the sooner shall we arrive at strictly scientific knowledge. Finally, Positive Philosophy is *organic*, in that it alone is capable of unifying and synthesizing all the branches of knowledge that otherwise would remain disorganized. This it can do because it limits itself severely to facts, and thus points out the sure path of real unity and progress.¹⁰

Now, a word about the *method* which Positive Philosophy makes use of in its scientific investigations and we shall have a fairly complete idea of the new system. A positive philosopher never tires of repeating that his is the only valid scientific method, that all others are to be relegated to the scrap-heap of out-moded habits of inquiry. It is a method entailing immediate observation of facts, and therefore the only justifiable method in matters of science. This observation, we have seen, is emphatically limited to what is called "experience," by which is meant experience of the senses, either external or internal. Obviously, such insistence on experience will do away with all that is supersensible, that is, with causes and essences and substances of thing; once these latter are placed beyond the pale of scientific knowledge, all *absolute* values must be ruled out as legitimate objects of scientific inquiry. Little wonder, then, that they stigmatize such realities as God and the human soul as medieval chimaeras, which at best are objects only of illegitimate science.

THE BEGINNINGS

It will help us considerably to understand the nature of Positivism, if we go back now to the very beginnings and try to discover just what started Auguste Comte on his so-called epoch-making discovery. About the time that Comte's mind was awakening to a realization of its power, German Transcendentalism was bidding fair to crush the whole of civilized Europe in its pincer movement. Those were the days when Hegelianism was being forced down the throats of all University men, professors and students alike. It was only natural that a reaction should set in against all this intellectual tyranny, that

⁹ This *proof*, of course, is always an appeal to some experiences of the senses.

¹⁰ Comte, *Système de politique positive*, I, p. 14.

human reason should rise up and reassert its inalienable rights. Materialism was the first reaction against all the nebosity of the German Idealists, who boasted that they could construct aprioristically the whole universe from pure concepts without regard to experience.¹¹ And not much time had gone by until another man stepped up to stop the Kantian and Hegelian onrush. That man, we know, was Auguste Comte.

So, it was the growing menace of Kantianism that first moved Comte to invent his Positive Philosophy. And although both Kant and Comte placed undue stress on the non-rational side of human nature, in no sense is Comte indebted to Kant for his system.¹² It is rather to David Hume that the "great high-priest of Positivism" is most indebted. As he himself openly avows: "Hume is my principal precursor in philosophy."¹³ Now Hume's most characteristic doctrine was the denial of all metaphysics, with special aversion for such "figments of the imagination" as substance and cause. It is hardly necessary for our present purpose to make a careful analysis of Hume's so-called unanswerable arguments. Suffice it to say that Hume reduced everything to the experience of the moment; that he made it impossible for us to be sure of the existence of the outside world; that we can never get at anything like a *Self* beneath the uninterrupted flux of impressions and ideas that succeed one another with kaleidoscopic rapidity. Consequently, if there is nothing beneath the experience of the moment, no one to have the experience and no thing that is experienced, there is no need for Metaphysics, except to dissolve the otherwise legitimate objects of this subtle science. It is little wonder that Hume ends his Treatise with an attitude of despair, and confesses naïvely that "this difficulty is too hard for my understanding."¹⁴

This is the intellectual precursor to whom Comte traces his ancestry, *i.e.*, to one who believed that he had given the *coup de grâce* to all future Metaphysics. But even Hume could not rest content with psychological atomism; even he felt the necessity of *integrating* all our experiences, and this he did by means of a fiction, the fiction, namely, of some kind of carrier for our separate perceptions. And while it is quite true that Comte will not follow Hume in his dissolution of self into a rapid flow of experiences, still, as we shall see

¹¹ Cf. "Marxism, The Birth of a Prejudice," *The Modern Schoolman*, May, 1942.

¹² Cf. Etienne Gilson, *The Unity of Philosophical Experience*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940), pp. 263-264.

¹³ Auguste Comte, *The Catechism of Positivism*, transl. R. Congreve, (London: J. Chapman, 1858), p. 7.

¹⁴ David Hume, *A Treatise on Human Nature*, edited by Selby-Bigge (Oxford University Press), p. 623. Or p. 559 of Green and Grosse's edition (Longmans, Green, and Co., 1878).

presently, Comte will avail himself of another fiction in order to effect the synthesis of all of man's scientific knowledge. Our question now is: Why and under what circumstances did such a fictitious synthesis present itself to Comte?

THE LAW OF THREE STAGES

In society, regardless of place or time, there are to be found three basic elements upon which the whole structure of any age is built. First of all, there is underlying all phases of culture and civilization, a definite state of *intellectual knowledge and development*. This intellectual status is then productive of a *determined level of civil life*, of a definite form of governmental administration. From the first and second flows in turn the third: a *commercial, economic, artistic, and literary milieu* proper to and produced by the intellectual and political factors. We can represent the relationship of those elements graphically:



Now, the sociological law, or the law of the three stages, the decisive factor which ushered Positive philosophy into being (a discovery Comte claims to have made as early as 1822), was based upon such an outline. This law or principle it was which made it possible for him to homogenize the whole field of human knowledge. Stated simply this law says that all human development, especially scientific, can be described by three stages. It begins with the *theological* or fictitious stage,¹⁵ in which man tries to explain the world by appealing to mysterious supernatural beings which animate everything. These he tries to render propitious to himself, in order that with their help he may direct the course of Nature to his own advantage. Comte says this stage shuts its eyes stubbornly to the fact of the unchangeableness of the natural laws; indulging the imagination, it neglects all observation. Obviously, such naïveté could not long continue; and just as soon as mankind had outgrown its swaddling clothes, it sloughed off this childish frame of mind and passed on to

¹⁵ The *theological* stage in its triple factors can be represented thus:

THEOLOGY
(which reached its
apex of develop-
ment in the me-
dieval synthesis of
Aquinas)

THEOCRACY
of the Middle
Ages.

FEUDALISM: the form of social and
economic life; Trade Guilds.
Age of chivalry, crusades, mon-
asteries.



Christian art and architecture
(Gothic cathedrals)
Christian literature: Dante, the
supreme example

the *metaphysical* stage.¹⁶ In this second stage man invokes abstractions or essences to account for the change in phenomena.

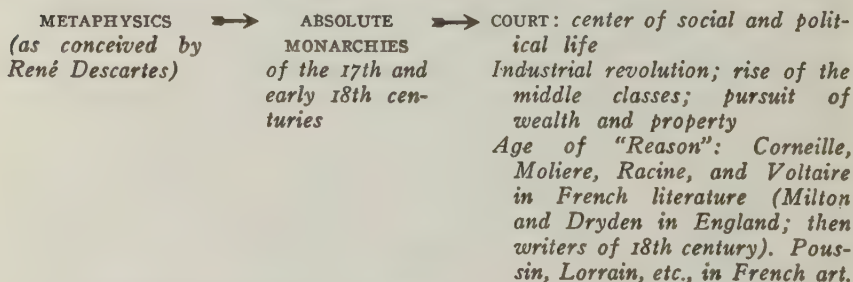
The previous spirits or gods are de-personalized and become abstract forces. Much of early modern science was of this character: men vaguely thought of "chemical" or "vital" forces operative in things about them, which caused things to change in appearance. These many forces in due course tended to become consolidated in a single force, called "Nature".¹⁷

And yet, even this advance could not wholly satisfy the mind of man; after becoming a bit more mature, man passed on to the third and final stage,—the *positive* or *scientific* stage. This stage of mental development, resting on the observation of facts, is the only attitude worthy of legitimate science. For in this "*grown-up*" stage

scientists content themselves with observation of the laws of phenomena, without any longer attributing them to unseen and unknowable spirits or abstract forces. It might be supposed that ultimately all the laws of phenomena will be reduced to one single law, possibly the law of gravitation, but Comte thinks that such reduction will always be impossible . . .¹⁸

Along with the elation of mind and heart that this epoch-making discovery must have brought to Comte, came a feeling of gloomy despair as he beheld all the confusion and "anarchy" that were then characteristic of the sciences. And even more pronounced were his frowns when he realized the task which confronted the positive spirit. The French Revolution, it is true, had destroyed the absolute monarchy which France had long known, but it had failed to establish a new political regime and new cultural milieu. The time was ripe for the positive sciences to come into their full stature, to give birth to a new and abiding political and social phase. But in their present state of complexity and heterogeneity they were unfit for the task. The more he reflected on this wretched status of scientific knowledge, the more he became convinced that it was brought to pass by the fact that the minds of men were being dominated *simultaneously* by these

¹⁶ We can best depict the *metaphysical* stage as follows:



¹⁷ William Kelley Wright, *A History of Modern Philosophy*, (New York: Macmillan Co., 1941), p. 413.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 414.

three modes of thought.^{18a} Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that in some of the sciences the so-called theological spirit was in command; in others, the metaphysical stage had been reached; and in some few others, the positive spirit had gained the ascendancy. Naturally, such confusion of methods was responsible for the disorder and stagnation in society; but if he could bring about the *universal reign of the positive spirit* with its supreme disdain for causes, essences, and absolute values, then a universal harmony would obtain in the scientific world, both in the natural sciences and the social subjects. As Lévy-Bruhl explains:

Let us now suppose the positive method to be applied not only to certain classes of phenomena but to all phenomena in the universe, including social and moral phenomena; let us suppose that the positive point of view ceases thus to be partial and special and becomes universal and general; that the sciences, in short, instead of progressing separately are united and disciplined by a positive philosophy: Shall we not thus obtain real mental harmony by means of unity in method and homogeneity in thought?¹⁹

REORGANIZATION OF SCIENCES

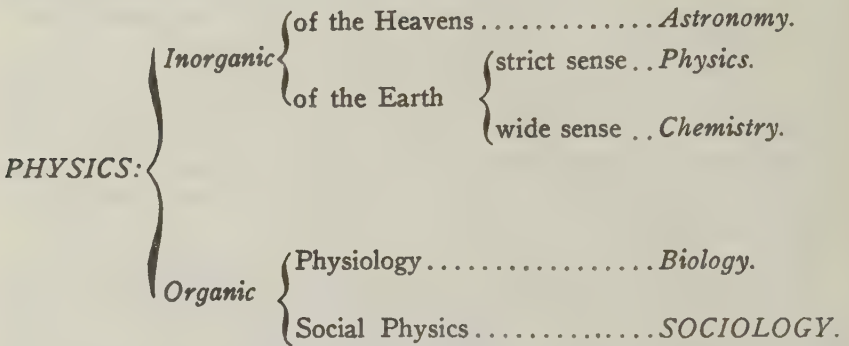
Comte now girds himself for the Herculean task of making the reign of the positive method universal, and to achieve this ambition he sees that he must reorganize the sciences.²⁰ Accordingly, he selects five abstract or theoretical sciences which he considers fundamental, and arranges them in hierarchical formation according to their degree of complexity, and this in such wise that each of the sciences thus arranged will presuppose those preceding, and yet not be presupposed

^{18a} "The closer we examine the present condition of the sciences the more we shall be struck with the anarchy above indicated (the conflicting methods among higher learning). We shall find one science in a perfectly positive stage (Physics), another in the metaphysical stage (Biology), a third in the supernatural stage (Sociology). Nor is this all. The same varieties will be found to coexist in the same individual mind. The same man who in Physics may be said to have arrived at the positive stage, and recognizes no other object of inquiry than the *laws* of phenomena, will be found still a slave to the metaphysical stage in Biology, and endeavoring to detect the *cause* of life; and so little emancipated from the supernatural stage in Sociology, that if you talk to him of the *possibility* of a science of history, or a social science, he will laugh at us as a 'theorizer'. . . . The present condition of science, therefore, exhibits three Methods instead of one: hence the anarchy. To remedy the evil, all differences must cease: one Method must preside." A. Comte, *Philosophie Positive*, as quoted by Lewes in *Comte's Philosophy of the Sciences*, (London: George Bell and Sons, 1904), p. 38.

¹⁹ Lévy-Bruhl, *op. cit.*, p. 368.

²⁰ For further explanation of this aspect of Positivism, as well as for its other aspects, confer the article in "Die Stimmen aus Maria-Laach," *Ergänzungsheft*, 45.

by any that come before it. This reduction of the sciences might be diagrammed thus:²¹



But after such arrangement and reduction of the sciences, the Frenchman's task has just begun. The hardest stretch lies ahead—how to *integrate* into unity those fundamental sciences in all their manifold diversity. By no means was his an easy road to travel. For once rational philosophy had been discarded, the means of ordering and ruling the particular sciences had been lost. Left to themselves the particular sciences tend to greater and greater disintegration through specialization and departmentalization. Left to themselves, they tend to burst asunder by the impact, as it were, of their own peculiar centrifugal force. Left to themselves, there is no unity or harmony, only anarchy and confusion. As Gilson points out:

Every scientist naturally has the temper and the tastes of a specialist: he first specializes in his own science; then he begins to specialize in a special part of that same science, and he goes on restricting his outlook on the world, until, at last, turning his back on all the other sciences and their results, he finds himself engaged in the exhaustive investigation of some microscopic detail which has now become the whole of reality so far as he is concerned. . . . In short, the natural tendency of science is not towards unity, but towards an ever more complete disintegration. Such facts point to an intrinsic heterogeneity of the world.²²

Since metaphysics and theology have been banished and since, as we remarked above, the sciences in themselves are inimical to union, an *objective* synthesis of the sciences was not possible. Hence Comte's

²¹ It will be noticed that Mathematics does not appear in this hierarchy. This does not mean that Comte banished it from his republic of the Sciences; rather, he thought that Mathematics is to be presupposed before Physics. For Descartes and Newton had shown conclusively that Mathematics is the only true foundation for all correct thinking.

The sciences of Morals and Religion have also been left out, because at one time Comte treated Moral as a branch of Physiology, and at another as a sub-division of Sociology.

²² *op cit.*, p. 258.

only recourse was to try to effect a *subjective* one:²³ he might possibly find the unifying factor in *Man*. Now Man has two sides to his nature, the rational and the affective, mind and heart. But Comte with unerring instinct saw that he could not ask the rational part of man to bring about this synthesis, for that would mean that he would have to go back to Metaphysics and admit such figments as cause, essence, substance. Consequently, he had no choice but to turn to the *affective* side of Man, i.e., from mind to feeling, from reason to sentiment. And this move he actually makes, not late in life and as *volte face* from all his previous work, but right from his earliest years; twenty years, in fact, before he met Clotilde de Vaux, whose "chaste and exquisite affection changed his life."²⁴

Man, then, is to unify the sciences for Comte; he makes all of them in some way bear on Man. Everything else in the five preliminary sciences is discarded as foreign to the purpose of a given science. Naturally, this means that Comte must tamper with each science; he cannot afford to let each of the sciences develop spontaneously and objectively. If he does, he will never be able to bring them into anything like a unified synthesis. Comte's "tampering," however, is not altogether arbitrary and precarious; he has a principle to guide him, and this principle is a feeling of love for Humanity, which will serve as the focal point towards which all the abstract, universal sciences are to converge. As he himself puts it:

The foundation of social science bears out the statement made at the beginning of this work, that the intellect under Positivism accepts its proper position of subordination to the heart. The recognition of this, which is the subjective principle of Positivism, renders the construction of a complete system of human life possible.²⁵

Comte then proceeds to work out his ground-plan for the regeneration of the sciences, and he takes up each one of them in minute detail. This is true especially of what he calls the queen of the sciences, Sociology; here he does his best work in trying to describe Human Society in its historical development from imperfect beginnings to perfect maturity. In the last stage Society has developed from the theological attitude of its infancy to the positive stage of full-grown manhood. But he is not content even with this; he continues to develop his Science of Humanity, until it turns into Morals and later still into a Religion, in which Humanity becomes *le Grand Etre*, or God Himself. Gilson sums it up nicely:

²³ Perhaps this turning from the *object* to the *subject* was also suggested to Comte by Hume's anticipation of the Kantian Copernican revolution in epistemology. Cf. Hume, *Treatise*, (Selby-Bigge's edition), p. 169; (p. 463 of Green and Grosse's edition).

²⁴ At least so Lewes describes this so-called Platonic friendship. Cf. Lewes, *Comte's Philosophy of Sciences*, (London, George Bell and Sons, 1904), p. 6.

²⁵ Auguste Comte, *A General View of Positivism*, transl. J. H. Bridges, (London: Routledge, 1908), p. 40.

The science of sociology thus gave rise to sociolatry, with love as the principle, order as the basis, and progress as the end. As he grew older, Comte felt more and more convinced of the holiness of his religious mission.²⁶

But we cannot follow Comte any further; even his most enthusiastic disciples would have us "draw the veil over Comte's subsequent efforts to become the founder of a new religion."²⁷

CONCLUSION

How often in the history of thought have we not seen philosophers become aware that their first principles were false by seeing the absurdities of their logical conclusions. Then in order to save their systems of thought, such philosophers have recourse to some irrational, and hence irrefutable, element behind which they hide to cover up the weaknesses of their principles. They appeal to some sentiment or emotion which rather than offering support to a philosophical system, is the open admission of the hopelessness of their philosophy. Hence, no one has criticized Auguste Comte more effectively than has Comte himself. For when he dethroned reason and set up in its place feeling, he was opening the door for all kinds of error. There remained one of two choices: either science was to be championed to the utter exclusion of philosophy, or philosophy must be retained at the cost of scientific inquiry. A choice was made, and you and I are experiencing its dire consequences.

Comte's sociology is one of the most striking philosophical experiments recorded by history. Reduced to its simplest expression, it means that if you give up metaphysics as incompletely rational, there remains no other choice but to "regenerate" science on a non-scientific basis, which entails the loss of science; or strictly to maintain the complete objectivity of scientific knowledge, which entails the loss of philosophy. Mill and Littré were right in refusing to tamper with the absolute objectivity of science, for the very existence of science was at stake; but Comte was also right in replying that, having identified rational knowledge with objective scientific knowledge, Mill and Littré could not reject all subjectivity and still have a philosophy. Such being the case, men naturally chose to lose philosophy, thus opening the age of intellectual disorder and social anarchy in which we ourselves are now groping our way.²⁸

Cartesianism carried to its logical conclusions by Spinoza leads irrevocably to the negation of all sensible reality and the identification of nature and God in one absolute being; Kantian and Hegelian idealism with its adoration of the state leads us to the present world

²⁶ Gilson, *op. cit.*, p. 266.

²⁷ Thus George Henry Lewes, *The Biographical History of Philosophy*, (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1875), p. 787.

"Over his subsequent efforts to found a social doctrine, and to become the founder of a new religion, let us draw the veil. They are unfortunate attempts which remind us of Bacon's scientific investigations . . ."

²⁸ Gilson, *op. cit.*, p. 270.

upheaval: "The state," in the words of Hegel, "is the march of God through the world," and "God" brings in his wake ruin and destruction; Comte with Positivism as a first principle leads us to the adoration of Humanity and of Auguste Comte, its great High Priest. Such are examples of systems whose conclusions destroy the validity of their own premises. What is needed, then, is a philosophical position which studies every order of reality in the light of its own degree of intelligibility and preserves for every individual his own proper existence. A philosophy which holds as self-evident the fact that man in virtue of his intellectual powers can arrive at truth and certitude; a wisdom, wherein Reality is the measure of Thought, and not Thought of Reality; a wisdom perennial enough to cross the centuries, but vital enough to be ever reexamining first principles in their application to current problems; a wisdom which can be expounded with supreme clarity, yet which touches the deepest depths of all things that are.

At least one thing should be certain: Descartes' mathematicism and Kant's physicism and Marxian determinism and Comtian Sociology are not such a wisdom.

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THE PRAGMATISM OF WILLIAM JAMES

If William James had succeeded in writing his projected work, *The Many and the One*,¹ we might be in a position to assay the value of his philosophy. For he did intend to do in that what he had not done elsewhere—give to his philosophy a systematic and final presentation. In default of such a presentation we find it necessary to try to put his philosophy together from what I am sure he would want us to regard as more or less fragmentary and tentative statements to be found in works, none of which was intended to present his philosophy as a whole.

As we make this effort, three things will strike us at once as characteristic of his thinking: the meaning he gives to truth, his pragmatic method, and his doctrine of radical empiricism. It would seem only natural to seek to find an inner and necessary connection between these three if we are to give unity to his philosophy. But we should be stopped from doing this by his own protest that "there is no logical connection between pragmatism, as I understand it, and a doctrine which I have recently set forth as 'radical empiricism.' The latter stands on its own feet. One may entirely reject it and still be a pragmatist."² Our sense of neatness may be disturbed by this, apparently, so serious a break in what we are accustomed to look for in the way of unity in a philosophy. But then we must recall that James was not averse to the hypothesis of noetic pluralism, since he was "friendly" to a pluralistic view of the universe in which "some parts of the world are connected so loosely with other parts, as to be strung along by nothing but the copula *and*. They might even come and go without these other parts suffering any internal change. This pluralistic view of *additive* constitution, is one that pragmatism is unable to rule out from serious consideration."³ A philosophy to fit such a universe might itself be "strung along" and open at the ends.

¹ Two forms of and Introduction to *The Many and the One* will be found in Ralph Barton Perry: *The Thought and Character of William James*, II, (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1935), pp. 378 sq.

² Preface to *Pragmatism*, (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1908), viii, ix. The word "doctrine" in this passage may seem a bit strange coming from James, who tells us (*The Will to Believe*, [New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1907], vii) that he calls his system empiricism because "it is content to regard its most assured conclusions concerning matters of fact as hypotheses liable to modification in the course of future experience." and (*ibid.*, p. 294): "No philosophy should pretend to be anything more [than an hypothesis]."

³ *Pragmatism*, 166. Cf. *A Pluralistic Universe*, p. 129: "Reality may exist in distributed form, in the shape not of an all, but of a set of eachees, just as it seems to."

ATTITUDE TOWARD PHILOSOPHICAL QUESTIONS

And then, too, James refuses to look on philosophy as a thing of cold reason. Our philosophy, he says, "is our individual way of just seeing and feeling the total push and pressure of the cosmos."⁴ Unity and consistency tend to lose their importance "if philosophy is more a matter of passionate vision than of logic—and I believe it is, logic only finding reasons for the vision afterwards."⁵ This way of looking at philosophy becomes somewhat intelligible to us if we keep in mind the fact that, before he began to philosophize, James was a psychologist whose strength as a psychologist lay in his power of analyzing mental states. And as he appears never to have abandoned the psychologist's point of view in his approach to matters of philosophy, he includes in his concept of philosophy the total content to be found in the mind when one is philosophizing. But may it not be suggested that not everything a man does when he is philosophizing is philosophy? The philosopher or the man of science may be influenced in his thinking by emotions, prejudices, preferences, or desires. But we need not therefore think that philosophy or science is an affair of emotions, prejudices, preferences, or desires. It may still be an affair of reason alone, although the philosopher or scientist may be hard put to it to keep his philosophy or science free from the intrusion of such disturbing elements. Of course it is man who thinks, and man is not a pure reason. But in spite of this it is not asking too much of him to require him to follow the laws of reason when he thinks and keep his emotions in leash. This is not asking him to make what James calls "the absurd abstractions of an intellect."⁶ It is merely demanding that he should undergo the discipline of logic for the sake of clear thinking.

And then again for James philosophy and knowledge in general are always subservient to action. Cognitive powers in general have only a ministerial function. They are the servants of higher powers—the powers of will.⁷

⁴ *Pragmatism*, p. 4.

⁵ *A Pluralistic Universe*, (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1909), p. 176.

⁶ *The Will to Believe*, pp. 92-93: "Pretend what we may, the whole man within us is at work when we form our philosophical opinions. Intellect, will, taste, and passion cooperate just as they do in practical affairs. . . . The absurd abstraction of an intellect verbally formulating all its evidence and carefully estimating the probability thereof by a vulgar fraction by the size of whose denominator and numerator alone it is swayed, is ideally as inept as it is actually impossible. It is almost incredible that men who are themselves working philosophers should pretend that any philosophy can be, or ever has been, constructed without the help of personal preference, belief or divination."

⁷ *The Will to Believe*, pp. 140-141: "From its first dawn to its highest actual

The thinker starts from some experience of the practical world, and asks its meaning. He launches himself upon the speculative sea, and makes a journey, long or short. He ascends into the empyrean and communes with the eternal essences. But whatever his achievements and discoveries be while gone, the utmost result they can issue in is some new practical maxim or resolve, or the denial of some old one, with which inevitably he is sooner or later washed ashore on the *terra firma* of concrete life again.⁸

So much of knowledge in modern times has practical application contributing to the comfort of life, that the estimate of knowledge as worth while for itself because it is a perfection of the intellect seems largely foreign to the modern mind. And no doubt it is true that from the earliest days of philosophy and even earlier the knowledge men asked most eagerly for from the wise men was that which would offer an answer to their equivalent of the question: What must I do to be saved? Should we want knowledge at all if we did not think of it as an aid to living? This, though, does not appear to be what James has in mind when he speaks of the ministerial function of knowledge. For him it is much of a drudge serving immediate utilitarian ends. Taking an evolutionary viewpoint he contends that "in the lower forms of life no one will pretend that cognition is anything more than a guide to appropriate action."⁹ From this starting point it is possible, using logic in the way an evolutionist does, to go on to the conclusion that the function of cognition even in its highest manifestations is one with its function in the lowest forms of conscious life. "The germinal question concerning things brought for the first time before consciousness is not the theoretic, 'What is this?' but the practical, 'Who goes there?' or rather, as Horwicz has admirably put it, 'What is to be done?'—'*Was fang ich an?*'"¹⁰ Therefore for him "cognition is not complete until it is discharged in act."¹¹ He admits that in the later mental development through the "hypertrophied cerebrum of man" there is a surplus of theoretic activity beyond what is needed for action. But that, he insists, is not denying, but only postponing the original claim that thinking is for a practical end, "and the active nature asserts itself in the end."¹²

If, then, cognitive processes are merely for the sake of action, as James contends, it will not be difficult to see how important a part emotions or desires or prejudices will have in building up the beliefs which issue in action. Only we have not been accustomed to look on such beliefs as philosophy. But if one believes, as James did, that reality itself is, "if not irrational, then at least non-rational in its constitution,"¹³ one's philosophy which is only "our individual way of attainment, we find that the cognitive faculty, where it appears to exist at all, appears but as one element in an organic mental whole, and as a minister to the higher mental powers, the powers of will."

⁸ *The Will to Believe*, pp. 142-3.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 85.

¹³ *A Pluralistic Universe*, p. 212.

seeing and feeling the total push and pressure of the cosmos,"¹⁴ cannot be expected to be entirely rational either. For James reality means, as he tells us in the same place, "all temporal reality without exception." He finds himself without good warrant for suspecting "any reality of a higher denomination than that distributed and strung-along and flowing sort of reality which we finite beings swim in." Such reality he finds incommensurable with logic. And here we may agree with him. A purely temporal, strung-along, flowing reality would be just one thing after another, and to look for reason in it would be futile. Without unity there is no rationality; but unfortunately unity always seemed to suggest to James his *bête-noir*, absolute idealism. He was more clear sighted than most empiricists in seeing that a "universe of simply collective or additive form . . . is all that empiricism, starting with simply posited single parts and elements, is ever able to attain to."¹⁵ He seemed unable to see any alternative between Plato and Democritus, and he preferred to go the whole way with Democritus. He did not want a world of the Absolute "forever rounded in and closed"; that was suited to the tender-minded who needed the assurance of the ultimate salvation of the universe in the higher unity of the Absolute, in which the chances and changes of temporal existence would be *aufgehoben*. The tough-minded, and as such he wished to be regarded, prefer a universe "strung along rectilinearly and open at its ends", in which novelty is possible and there is the thrill of the uncertainty of salvation.¹⁶ Hence his insistence on novelty, on the right to believe even beyond evidence, his pragmatic standard of judging truth by its workability, his tychism, which after Bergson he changed to synechism, his finite god, and his meliorism. It may not be too much to say that all that is characteristic of his philosophy is owing to his initial preference of empiricism over intellectualism.

With this sketch of the mental attitude of William James as he approached philosophical questions, it may be possible to go on to a consideration of what seem to be the characteristics of his philosophy.

MEANING OF TRUTH

When he wrote his *Pragmatism*, he gave a certain account of truth which later on in the preface to *The Meaning of Truth* he recognized as constituting the "pivotal part" of the book on Pragmatism.¹⁷ It was pivotal, no doubt, because Pragmatism could not be made to work as a method apart from a certain understanding of the meaning

¹⁴ *Pragmatism*, p. 4; *A Pluralistic Universe*, p. 81.

¹⁵ *A Pluralistic Universe*, pp. 103-4.

¹⁶ *Pragmatism*, pp. 12 sqq; 263 sqq.

¹⁷ *The Meaning of Truth*, Preface, v.

of truth. Truth, he said, is a property of some of our ideas.¹⁸ It is to be noted that when he speaks of truth, he has reference to truth of thought or to what was called logical truth by the scholastics. This, he assures us, is the difference between pragmatist and anti-pragmatist on the subject of truth, that the pragmatist is thinking of truth as belonging to ideas, whereas the anti-pragmatist regards truth as somehow belonging to the object.¹⁹ Nevertheless he is willing to admit that truth means "their [the ideas'] 'agreement,' as falsity means their disagreement with reality."²⁰ Pragmatists and intellectualists, we are told, both accept this definition as a matter of course, but their quarrel is on the meaning to be assigned to "agreement." Pragmatists, or better, perhaps, William James speaking for Pragmatism, understands agreement in a wide and loose sense. And to agree with a reality in this wide sense "*can only mean to be guided either straight up to it or into its surroundings, or to be put into such working touch with it as to handle either it or something connected with it better than if we disagreed.*"²¹ This is indeed a wide sense of "agreement," but, of course, it is the only sense that is compatible with Pragmatism. If, then, Pragmatism is to be accepted and the way opened for the prevalence of the doctrine of radical empiricism, this must be the meaning of agreement. If this conclusion seems arbitrary, its justification can be found through the Faith-ladder, which we are assured by William James himself is not a logical process.²²

This pragmatic way of understanding truth he looks on as a kind of refuge from the breakdown of the older view that nature embodied ideas, "thoughts of God," and that as we acquired truth, we reproduced these ideas. But now there are so many theories to explain nature, so many geometries, so many logics, that the old view can no longer be held.²³ Our only recourse, then, is to try to validate our ideas by following them out to what they point to, to see what, if any, practical difference it will make whether we accept them as true or not. By this process we may discover what our ideas are "known-as," and this is all the truth we shall find in them. In this way we can arrive at the pragmatic notion that "*true ideas are those that we can assimilate, validate, corroborate and verify. False ideas are those that we cannot.* That is the practical difference it makes to us to have true ideas; that, therefore, is the meaning of truth, for it is all that truth is known-as."²⁴ Needless to say, Protagoras is not far off

¹⁸ *Pragmatism*, p. 198.

²⁰ *Pragmatism*, p. 198.

¹⁹ *The Meaning of Truth*, Preface,

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 212.

²² *The Meaning of Truth*, Preface, xii: "I am interested in another doctrine in philosophy to which I have given the name of radical empiricism, and it seems to me that the establishment of the pragmatist theory of truth is a step of first-rate importance in making radical empiricism prevail."

For the Faith-ladder cf. *Some Problems of Philosophy*, p. 224.

²³ *The Meaning of Truth*, p. 57 sqq.

when our ability to verify ideas is made the test of their truth. But this need not be disturbing to one who holds that "at each and every concrete moment, truth for each man is what that man 'troweth' at that moment with the maximum of satisfaction to himself; and similarly, abstract truth, truth verified by the long run, and abstract satisfactoriness, long-run satisfactoriness, coincide."²⁵

To the scholastic leaning on Aristotle, as interpreted mostly by St. Thomas, knowing is a kind of becoming. We know by receiving the form of the object, and to receive the form of an object is to become that object. A scholastic, then, will look askance at such an expression as, "Truth is made."²⁶ Of course James is speaking of the truth of the idea, as was noted above, and not of ontological truth, which makes the shock somewhat less. But neither will the scholastic take kindly to the expressions, true ideas, or truth of ideas, since he looks for truth in the judgment and not in the ideas. But passing up these ambiguities as unimportant, he will still find it difficult to understand how an idea is made true by validation or verification. Validation, he will be able to admit, is laying bare the evidence on which the truth rests, and will therefore make the truth known if the idea was already true. But if the idea is not true without the validation, it is inconceivable that there could be any validation that would make it true. And so a scholastic must be forgiven if he finds unintelligible such apparently simple statements as: "Truth *happens* to an idea. It [the idea?] becomes true. It is made true by events."²⁷ And still more will he be puzzled by what follows in the same place: "Its verity is in fact an event, a process; the process namely of its verifying itself, its *verification*. Its validity is the process of its *validation*." These statements would make sense if we could think of James as enough of a Platonist to admit formal causality. But what they could mean for an empiricist passes understanding. James never did succeed in making his idea of truth sufficiently clear to prevent what he considers misinterpretations by his opponents. This is abundantly clear in *The Meaning of Truth*, with its statements and re-statements of his position and his repeated attempts to set his opponents right in their understanding of what that position was. But this is no doubt the price he had to pay for his resolve to be a pragmatist and therefore to find a concept of truth that would meet the demands of the pragmatic way of thinking.

²⁴ *Pragmatism*, p. 201.

²⁵ *The Meaning of Truth*, p. 89.

²⁶ *Pragmatism*, p. 218: "Truth is *made*, just as health, wealth and strength are made, in the course of experience." Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 224: "Like the half-truths, absolute truth will have to be *made*, made as a relation incidental to the growth of a mass of verification-experience, to which the half-true ideas are all along contributing their quota."

²⁷ *Pragmatism*, p. 201.

PRAGMATIC METHOD

For James pragmatism is first a method and secondly a genetic theory of the meaning of truth.²⁸ It was, of course, in no sense an invention of his, and he never pretended that it was. In the preface to *Pragmatism*, vii, he speaks of the pragmatic movement as having suddenly precipitated itself out of the air.²⁹ Elsewhere he says that, "it was first introduced into philosophy by Mr. Charles Peirce in 1878."³⁰ It remained unnoticed until 1898 when James himself brought it forward again. James Ward in a letter of June 15, 1909, said: "All the worth I see in pragmatism is to be found—don't kick—in Kant, in his 'primacy of the practical reason' and in his showing that there is room for faith."³¹ Peirce himself said that he derived his pragmatism from Kant, but James is responsible for the view that it originated with Peirce.³² Perry's verdict on this question is: "Perhaps it would be correct, and just to all parties, to say that the modern movement known as pragmatism is largely due to James' misunderstanding of Peirce."³³

He looked on pragmatism as a mediating position between a too religious rationalism and an irreligious empiricism.³⁴ Of the work, *Pragmatism*, he said in a letter to Lovejoy, September 13, 1907: "This book was never intended for a treatise, but for a sketch, to make air and room for an empirical philosophy that might not necessarily be irreligious, to breathe in."³⁵ As a method, however, he thought of it as a way "of settling metaphysical disputes that otherwise might be interminable." When a question arises, such as: Is the world one or many? or is it material or spiritual? the pragmatic method attempts to give the answer by tracing each notion back to its practical consequences. If there is no practical difference whichever alternative is chosen, then the dispute is meaningless and idle.³⁶ As a method, too, pragmatism is "*The attitude of looking away from first things, principles, 'categories,' supposed necessities; and of looking towards last*

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 65-66.

²⁹ "The pragmatic method, so-called—I do not like the name, but apparently it is too late to change it—seems to have suddenly precipitated itself out of the air."

³⁰ *Pragmatism*, pp. 46-7; *Cf. ibid.*, p. 50: "There is absolutely nothing new in the pragmatic method. Socrates was an adept at it. Aristotle used it methodically. Locke, Berkeley, and Hume made momentous contributions by its means. Shadworth Hodgson keeps insisting that realities are only what they are 'known as'."

³¹ *Cf. Perry: The Thought and Character of William James*, II, p. 655.

³² *Ibid.*, II, p. 407, n. 6.

³³ *Ibid.*, II, p. 409.

³⁴ *Pragmatism*, pp. 32-3.

³⁵ Perry: *op. cit.*, II, p. 450.

³⁶ *Pragmatism*, p. 45.

things, fruits, consequences, facts."³⁷ It is an attitude of orientation. It seeks to discover truth, not from first principles, but from ultimate results. The consequence a thing's being true has for us is what makes the thing true for us.

A difficulty of which James was not unaware³⁸ is that the fruits or consequences of anything show, not that the thing is true, but that it is in some sense good. He does not answer it very satisfactorily, rather putting it off with the observation, true enough, that the true is one species of good. Now if the pragmatic method could lead us to see the good fruit or consequence as a good of the intellect, it would show it to us also as true. But it can only lead us to consequences that are good in some sense. Consequences good in some of the many senses of the word can follow from the false as well as from the true. The pragmatic method, then, cannot lead us to the discovery of the true, unless you first define the true in a way to suit the results obtainable by the pragmatic method.

RADICAL EMPIRICISM

But his occupation with the meaning of truth and the method of pragmatism was only preparatory to the working out of what he considered his philosophy. He called it radical empiricism. He never came to presenting an adequate exposition of it, though after his death a volume called *Essays in Radical Empiricism* brought together many of his written attempts to state it. A brief summary of it taken from a letter to Pillon is given by Perry.³⁹

My philosophy is what I call radical empiricism, a pluralism, a tychism, which represents order as being gradually won and always in the making. It is theistic, but not *essentially* so. It rejects all doctrines of the Absolute. It is finitist; but it does not attribute to the question of the infinite the great methodological importance which you and Renouvier attribute to it. I fear that you may find my system too *bottomless* and romantic. I am sure that, be it in the end judged true or false, it is essential to the evolution of clearness in philosophic thought some one should defend a pluralistic empiricism radically.

Empiricism, he tells us,⁴⁰ is known as the opposite of rationalism. And while rationalism tends to emphasize universals and make wholes prior to parts, empiricism lays stress on the part and treats the whole as a collection and the universal as an abstraction. A philosophy of this type will be similar to that of Hume, but will differ on one point that earns for it the name, *radical*. To be radical it must not admit any element that is not directly experienced or exclude any one that is directly experienced. In such a philosophy the relations that connect experiences must themselves be experienced, and an experi-

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 54, 55.

³⁹ Perry, *op. cit.*, II, p. 373.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

⁴⁰ *Essays in Radical Empiricism*, pp. 41 sqq.

enced relation must be counted as real as anything else. Ordinary empiricism leaves the world too disjointed and prepares for the reaction of the rationalists who endeavor to supply "transexperiential agencies of unification," such as substances, powers, or selves. Radical empiricism emphasizes the conjunctive relations and so does away with the need of the rationalistic unifying agents. Conjunctive relations are of different degrees of intimacy, from the merely external "being with another" in a universe of discourse, through the relations of activity, to the relation experienced "between terms that form states of mind and are immediately conscious of continuing each other."

When we have disposed of the agencies of unity of the rationalists and repaired the disjointedness of the ordinary empiricists, we seem to have left a world of the purely experienced, but James would call it a world of pure experience.

The instant field of the present is always experience in its "pure" state, plainly unqualified actuality, a simple *that*, as yet undifferentiated into thing and thought, and only virtually classifiable as objective fact or as some one's opinion about fact.⁴¹

Or again:

"Pure experience" is the name which I gave to the immediate flux of life which furnishes the material to our later reflection with its conceptual categories. Only new-born babes, or men in semi-coma from sleep, drugs, illnesses or blows, may be assumed to have an experience pure in the literal sense of a *that* which is not yet any definite *what*, though ready to be all sorts of whats; full both of oneness and of manyness, but in respects that don't appear. . . . Pure experience in this state is but another name for feeling or sensation.⁴²

So then a philosophy of pure experience such as radical empiricism should be, should have a world of pure experience to philosophize in and about. It should be presented with mere *that's* which reflection will subsequently define as *what's*. But as the experience of pure *that's* seems to be impossible except for new-born babes and men in semi-coma, the prospects for a philosophy of radical empiricism seem none too bright. But as the philosophy of radical empiricism was never presented in final form by James, it may be fairer all around to rest content with a presentation of what it seems to mean. He made a notable attempt to set forth a philosophy, under the impression, no doubt, which most moderns have, that every philosopher must have a system of his own. He was modern in his deliberate preference of empiricism to rationalism, but if he was to be an empiricist, he wanted to be empirical the whole way.

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⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 93-4.

A SUMMARY OF BERGSONISM

In the year 1881, when Henri Bergson began his long career of teaching, the intellectual world worshipped two idols, the Natural Sciences and German Idealism. Science was a religion; mechanism and materialistic monism were its two chief sects. Among the high priests could be counted Spencer, Taine, Renan, Haeckel; and Auguste Comte, who would set everything in its rigidly determined place, might well be called the master of ceremonies. It was the age of discovery and invention, when knowledge was power and scientific facts supreme. Science had contributed a welter of facts; but there was need for some systematic unification, a metaphysical key which would afford hierarchy and order. And the only system at hand were the offshoots of unreal German transcendentalism, the philosophies of Fichte, Schelling and Hegel, who by a logical theogony had sprung from the head of the occasion of this symposium, Immanuel Kant.

Against the presumptions of science Bergson reacted immediately. He later explained: "It was from the idolatry of science that I first set out on my intellectual odyssey."¹ He was convinced, too, that all forms of Kantianism, by their distinction between phenomenal and noumenal reality, had cut off from philosophy any chance to attain a unified and metaphysical knowledge worthy of the name. All of his philosophy would have no other end than "to reerect the bridge, broken since Kant's day, between metaphysics and science."²

FUNDAMENTAL THEORY: *la durée*

The starting point of this praiseworthy purpose was found in the solution of the paradoxes of Zeno. In all of Bergson's works, motion and change are a recurrent theme. Because it is a datum of experience, the reality of motion is incontestable. Yet the arguments of the Eleatics, according to Bergson, have never been satisfactorily answered, since in all the solutions attempted the same fallacy has been retained. This fallacy arises out of the endeavor to reduce motion to the path which it traverses and to subdivide it and put it together again as if it were made up of homogeneous parts, like the space which subtends it. But movement can never be made out of immobilities, nor time out of space. The space traversed in any motion, being extension and quantified, is divisible; but movement is an intensive act and pertains to quality—it is a duration or a progress.³

¹ "Entretien avec M. Bergson," *La Vie Catholique*, vol. X, no. 432, (Jan. 7, 1933), p. 1.

² *Bull. de la Soc. Franc. de Phil.*, May, 1901, pp. 63-64.

³ Cf., for example, *Essai sur les Données Immédiates de la Conscience*,

This notion of a qualitative rather than a quantitatively measurable existence is the core of Bergson's doctrine, as he himself remarks in a much quoted letter:⁴

In my opinion any resumé of my views would distort them in their ensemble, and, by that distortion, expose them to a host of objections, if its author did not at once place himself at, and continually return to, that which I consider the very central point of the doctrine—the intuition of duration. . . . The representation of a duration which is heterogeneous, qualitative, creative . . . is the point whence I set out and to which I constantly return. It demands a great mental effort; but once a man has reached this representation . . . he feels constrained to change his point of view about reality; he sees that the very greatest difficulties have arisen through the philosophers' having always put time and space on the same plane.

Mechanistic science, Bergson's second *bête noir*, is guilty of the same mistake, because when it is confronted by motion it reduces movement to something other than itself, and substitutes for its dynamic and ever-progressive reality (or duration) a symbol derived from extension in space. Thus science (since it insists upon measuring, and since space is the only thing measurable) measures movement by bringing it to a standstill, as it analyzes life by killing it. "The opposition between spatial time and duration, or rather the feeling of the contradiction inherent in a duration representable spatially, showed me the impotence of mechanism."⁵

The true nature of time must be looked for in our own consciousness; duration and consciousness are inseparable because both are one, simple and indivisible. "Duration therefore implies consciousness, and we put consciousness at the base of things by the very fact that we attribute to them a time that endures."⁶ Personal consciousness perceives immediately the process of movement which is thinking, and catches it in its undivided, progressive, living reality. Here we "no longer measure duration but we feel it."⁷ And we see that it is incapable of measurement; for "growing old and duration belong to the qualitative order. No analysis however prolonged can reduce them to quantity."⁸

In thus detaching the symbolic Ego (Kant's transcendental Ego) from the real Ego, consciousness is afforded a glimpse of the nature of this duration:

pp. 85 ff; *Matière et Mémoire*, pp. 250 ff; *L'Evolution Créatrice*, pp. 308 ff; *Durée et Simultanéité*, entire.

⁴ Letter to Höfding, cited in Höfding's book, *La Philosophie de Bergson*, (Paris: Librairie Félix Alcan, 1916), p. 160.

⁵ *L'Intuition Philosophique*, pp. 110-111.

⁶ *Durée et Simultanéité*, (Paris: Librairie Félix Alcan, 1922), p. 61.

⁷ *Essai sur les Données immédiates de la Conscience* (Paris: Librairie Félix Alcan, 1889), p. 126.

⁸ *Durée et Simultanéité*, *ibid.*

It is a qualitative multiplicity, with no likeness to number; an organic development which is yet not an increasing quantity; a pure heterogeneity within which there are no distinct qualities. In a word, the moments of inner duration are not external one to another.⁹

In this duration, "which is not the abstract 'time' of which the philosophers speak, but something concrete,"¹⁰ is seen the very stuff of reality,¹¹ than which there is "nothing more resistant nor more substantial."¹² It is "the ceaseless upspringing of something new,"¹³ a process of enrichment with perpetual novelty, a creative evolution. In this struggle for self-preservation, the past endures into the present, and by the very fact of remaining in existence in consciousness 'gnaws' so to speak, at the future and by swelling as it advances creates it.¹⁴ Thus for a conscious being "to exist is to change, to change is to grow in completeness, to grow in completeness is to create oneself indefinitely."¹⁵ And this process which is constitutive of reality may be called, "for want of a better word," creation, growth, progress, consciousness, life, liberty, the *élan vital*.

With this beginning in our own consciousness, we may by an analogical inference (the phrase is not Bergson's) gradually extend this concept of duration or vitality to the whole universe, conceived as a single whole. And it will be seen that all reality has two opposed movements—*spirituality or duration* which is ever growing, and *materiality or matter* which impedes this incessant creation.¹⁶

THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

As there are two aspects of reality, so also are there two faculties of apprehending them. "The problem of knowledge is identical with that of metaphysics."¹⁷ At the intellectual level Bergson distinguishes two powers of the soul, intellect and intuition.

Intellect: Intellect, we are told, has for its object the unorganized solid¹⁸ or matter;¹⁹ of the discontinuous and immobile alone can it come into contact,²⁰ for its natural function is to proceed by solid

⁹ *Essai* . . . , p. 226.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* p. 119.

¹¹ *L'Evolution Créatrice* (Paris: Librairie Félix Alcan, 1907), p. 287.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 4; *Durée et Simultanéité*, p. 54.

¹³ *L'Evolution Créatrice*, p. 177.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 8, 283.

¹⁶ Though this thought is paramount in all his works, in *L'Evolution Créatrice* it receives explicit development. An interesting study would be to show the relation of Bergson's concept of the consciousness or spirituality of reality with that of Leibniz's doctrine of monads. The fundamental viewpoint is not dissimilar.

¹⁷ *L'Evolution Créatrice*, p. 193; cf. p. vi and p. 201.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 166.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 225.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 168.

and static perceptions.²¹ Harnessed as it is by spatial forms it cannot grasp the undivided mobility of the real, but can only take views or snapshots of it, thus obtaining its ideas.²² Starting from the immobile the intellect conceives and expresses movement only as a function of immobility and substitutes for a process of change, fixed points of that process,²³ "like a flash of lightning illumines for a moment the tumult of a nocturnal storm."²⁴ It thus decomposes the flowing and ever changing reality in order to reconstitute it and reorganize it for the needs of practicality.²⁵

Here we have the essence of this faculty. The intellect is never disinterested and is never satisfied to merely contemplate the nature of reality. It is not made nor is it fit for this pure speculation, but rather to be a light for our conduct and to direct us in action. It is the organ of analysis and of science which is always practical: "the object of science is to increase our power over things."²⁶

Intuition: Life and movement may stubbornly refuse to yield their secrets to the intellect, but they surrender their nature to another faculty which man possesses in germ and which he may more fruitfully develop—the faculty of intuition.

In a letter to J. Chevalier in 1920²⁷ Bergson wrote:

You are perfectly right in saying that all the philosophy I have expounded since my first *Essai* affirms, contrary to Kant, the possibility of a supra-sensuous intuition. In taking the term "intellect" in the wide sense given to it by Kant, I can call the intuition of which I speak "intellectual." But I should prefer to call it "supra-intellectual," because I have felt bound to restrict the meaning of the term "intellect" and reserve it for the whole of the discursive faculties of the mind, originally destined to think matter. Intuition bears upon spirit.

This is another fundamental departure from the thought of Kant. Kant had said that no intellectual intuition is possible, but that all intuitions are sensuous and therefore regulated by the two forms of sensibility, space and time. Bergson, as we saw,²⁸ believed that it is a great error to put space and time in the same category.

This faculty of intuition is not something mysterious. That it exists can be proved by anyone who has had occasion to exercise it, perhaps, for example, in literary composition which is truly creative,²⁹

²¹ *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 66. (The English translation of this work has been used throughout.)

²² *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 8; *L'Evolution Créatrice*, pp. 331, 367.

²³ *L'Evolution Créatrice*, p. 167.

²⁴ *Matière et Mémoire* (Paris: Librairie Félix Alcan, 1896); p. 209.

²⁵ *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 66; *Le Rire*, p. 157; *L'Evolution Créatrice*, pp. 144, 169.

²⁶ *Perception du Changement*, p. 9; *L'Evolution Créatrice*, pp. 47, 209, 214.

²⁷ Quoted in Chevalier's book, *Bergson*, p. 296.

²⁸ Cf. note 4 *supra*.

²⁹ *Les Deux Sources de la Morale et la Religion*, (hereafter referred to as *Les Deux Sources*), p. 271; *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 89.

perhaps in the flash of appreciation which one experiences when gazing upon or listening to a work of art.³⁰ Such experiences cannot be explained, in Bergson's view, solely by intellect and sense; they must be supra-intellectual.

This intuition is not a passive dreaming or vague sentiment; it is essentially "active" and even "violent";³¹ for the mind has "to do violence to itself and has to reverse the direction of its operation by which it habitually thinks, and has perpetually to review, or rather to recast all its categories."³² By a literally superhuman effort the philosopher who uses it may transcend the point of view of intellect and by a kind of intellectual sympathy or auscultation³³ perceive in some way the throbbings of the heart of reality.³⁴ In most of us this intuition appears as an almost extinguished lamp, which flickers up only at intervals for a few brief moments; but from this faint glow there will come the light to comprehend the deep nature and significance of the reality of life about us.³⁵

Intuition alone is able to put us in touch with the Absolute ("Absolute" here signifying reality or perfection in itself or what is not symbolized);³⁶ and this is important for "in the Absolute we are and move and live."³⁷ Intuition will be the specific instrument of philosophy, for it alone can "see" and "know" as a metaphysician should know.³⁸ By it alone can we overcome the relativism of Kant and his distinction between noumenal and phenomenal: it is the bridge between science and metaphysics.

Although the philosopher must live by flashes of inspiration and must feel the breath of reality upon him and must splash about in its "beneficent fluid,"³⁹ Bergson would not have his findings considered vague nor nebulous nor—horrible word—"mystical," at least in the commonly accepted sense.

If by mysticism we understand, as we nearly always do understand nowadays, a reaction against positive science, the doctrine which I am defending is from one end to the other nothing but a protest against mysticism. . . . But if by mysticism is meant a certain appeal to the interior and spiritual life, then all philosophy is mystical.⁴⁰

³⁰ *Le Rire*, pp. 153, 157; *Les Deux Sources*, p. 270.

³¹ *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 56.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 69; cf. letter to Höfding cited above, note 4.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

³⁵ *Les Deux Sources*, p. 267; *L'Evolution Créatrice*, p. 290.

³⁶ *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 5. For Bergson's use of the term "absolute," cf. *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 1, and his article in Lalande's *Vocabulaire de la Philosophie*, s.v. "Inconnaissable."

³⁷ *L'Evolution Créatrice*, p. 217.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 208; *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 40.

³⁹ *L'Evolution Créatrice*, p. 209.

⁴⁰ *Bull. de Soc. Franc. de Phil.*, May, 1901, p. 63.

(In his last book, *Les Deux Sources de la Morale et de la Religion*, Bergson became more explicit and placed mystical contemplation in a direct and continuous line with his philosophical intuition. Mystical intuition, especially in its highest form, that of the great Christian contemplatives, is no less certain and no less philosophical than the intuition concerned with lesser realities.⁴¹)

METHOD OF PHILOSOPHY

In his method of philosophizing and in his description of the steps which lead to philosophical certainty, Bergson is sharply opposed to all rationalistic systems of philosophy. For him experience is the only source of true knowledge.⁴² Induction and deduction, though legitimate in science and useful in obtaining dominion over matter, can give when there is question of ultimate realities only 'metaphorical' answers.⁴³ Empiricism is the only method to be followed, for only of what one can see and touch and feel can one be certain.⁴⁴ Such data of experience are irresistible,⁴⁵ and if the philosopher "sticks as closely as possible to facts,"⁴⁶ his philosophy will have an objectivity as great as that of any of the positive sciences.⁴⁷ Thus the true method is one of integral experience.⁴⁸

Bergson's method of integration, however, is singular. First of all, the problem or question to be subjected to the scrutiny of experience must be carefully distinguished from kindred problems, since here, as in science, success depends on the original delimitation.⁴⁹ But if after all the available facts of experience have been investigated, other questions intimately connected with the original problem are raised or implied, the philosopher must abstain from answering, and must not speculate beyond the given facts. All he has experienced he must affirm; for the rest there must be only *ἔποχή*. These restrictions will sometimes be difficult and will necessitate the frequent use of phrases like "thus conceived," "so defined," "for want of a better word," "as if"—(which are to be found on nearly every page of Bergson's works).

⁴¹ For an explanation of the place of mysticism in philosophy and its degrees of certitude cf. *Les Deux Sources*, pp. 262-268.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 265.

⁴³ *L'Evolution Créatrice*, p. 232 ff.

⁴⁴ *Les Deux Sources*, p. 249.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 266, 274, 340.

⁴⁷ Letter to P. de Tonquédec, in *Etudes*, tome 130 (February 20, 1912), p. 515.

⁴⁸ *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 30.

⁴⁹ *Les Deux Sources*, p. 109.

As an example of this strict delimitation of the problem and of the exclusion of those only implied, let us consider how Bergson would answer the question: whence did life originate? In *L'Evolution Créatrice* he was concerned solely with the psychological and biological aspects of the evolution of life and with the contrast between life and matter. The facts studied (taken from the fields of biology, geology, paleontology, and psychology) would indicate, he argued, that life is characterized by incessant activity, progress, freedom, while matter is something static, the source of determinism and the occasion of death. This was the general conclusion of the book. Another question, beyond the original limits set, but logically connected, then arises: where and how did life *ultimately* begin? Is the answer creation by a divine being? Bergson replied that the facts treated here did not give experimental knowledge of such an action or of such a being.⁵⁰ All we can know, he said, is that life has begun (or is eternal) and that there must be some source for it. But it is urged: what will this center or source of life and energy be called? God? Such a step would be unfaithful to the method which postulates experimental knowledge of such a being and which will not yield to the intellect in attaching to movement a mover.⁵¹ "Everything is obscure in the idea of creation, if we think of things which are created and a thing which creates;" nor can creation be an enterprise of God.⁵² In fact, if we persist in calling this source of life "God," then from the point of view of the empirical philosopher "God" could be only "a continuity of shooting forth" and, "thus defined, will have nothing of the ready made: he is incessant life, action, liberty."⁵³ Such statements were the occasion of charges of blasphemy, atheism or at least pantheism. Yet in *Les Deux Sources de la Morale et de la Religion*, where another series of facts is considered, namely those of the moral order and mysticism, Bergson expressly declares that "creation is an enterprise of God to join to Himself beings worthy of his love,"⁵⁴ and God Himself is described in terms which, as has been said,⁵⁵ are worthy of a mystic and a saint. His statements were misleading, but he was faithful to his method.

Tâtonnement: Having carefully delimited the problem and having gathered all the relevant facts, Bergson would direct his philosopher

⁵⁰ In the letter to P. de Tonquédec cited above: ". . . je ne vois rien à ajouter pour le moment, en tant que philosophe, parce que la méthode philosophique, telle que je l'entends . . . ne permet pas d'énoncer une conclusion qui dépasse de quoi que ce soit les considérations empiriques sur lesquelles elle se fonde."

⁵¹ *L'Evolution Créatrice*, p. 325.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 269.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 270.

⁵⁴ *Les Deux Sources*, p. 273.

⁵⁵ C. Rice, O.P., "M. Bergson, Mystic," *Blackfriars*, March, 1933, p. 201.

to wander about among them "feeling and groping,"⁵⁶ and to seek a clear intuition of the unity that is hidden in their multiplicity. At this stage, however, he must be content with "proximate results" and should not make final or definitive conclusions. Because new facts from other fields might shed new light on the solution, he is still in the terrain of the probable and possesses merely the direction in which truth may be found. Prudently then he should remain vague and abstain from too categoric affirmations.⁵⁷

Recoupment: But the philosopher is not condemned to such tenuous probabilities. Each isolated problem taken by itself gives only probability, but it also supplies "lines of facts." These orientate him toward truth, since at their point of convergence a deeper truth—or even perhaps Truth itself—must lie.⁵⁸ Thus the results which were "temporarily final" may be extended, enlarged and corrected endlessly;⁵⁹ and the study of new problems or different aspects of the same problem will cancel out or corroborate the previous results.⁶⁰ Here at last will certainty be won—at least practically.⁶¹

It is obvious that a philosophy so developed can hardly be called a metaphysical system; and this Bergson would be the first to admit.⁶² Metaphysics in his view is not a dogmatic science like mathematics, but will be a progression rather than something complete, a road to be followed rather than a terminus attained. It will not be the work of one man, but will depend on the constant effort, continued and organized, of many philosophers and many scientists, all using the same method, all organized in the same deference to experience.⁶³ Not being a closed system but susceptible of rectilinear and indefinite development, the "new philosophy" will admit of corrections, further verification and corroboration, and will be capable of mounting ever higher and higher.⁶⁴ Consequently, Bergson's last work is not, in his eyes, the last word, the keystone of the arch, the *finis coronans opus*. Its findings, too, are only tentative; and while they may be said naturally to complement, they do not necessarily complete the conclusion of his previous works.⁶⁵ The final word of the metaphysics Bergson would espouse has not yet been—nor ever shall be—spoken.⁶⁶ It

⁵⁶ *Les Deux Sources*, p. 296.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 266.

⁵⁹ *L'Energie Spirituelle*, pp. 63, 73.

⁶⁰ *Les Deux Sources*, p. 296.

⁶¹ *L'Energie Spirituelle*, p. 4; *Les Deux Sources*, p. 265.

⁶² *La Philosophie*, p. 33.

⁶³ "Entrétién avec M. Bergson," *loc. cit.*

⁶⁴ *Les Deux Sources*, p. 296.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 275.

⁶⁶ *L'Evolution Créatrice*, p. vii.

would seem that the most precious part of Truth is the struggle to find it.

CRITICISM

In attempting to evaluate Bergsonism, it is imperative to make use of a distinction, first used by Maritain,⁶⁷ between "bergsonisme de fait" and "bergsonisme d'intention." From the viewpoint of the modern schoolman his purpose and intentions were on the side of the angels; but often the consequences of his doctrines, taken in literal strictness and pushed to their logical ultimates, might put him in another camp.

Against determinism Bergson repeatedly asserted the lucid fact of liberty; against materialism he combatted with the reality of the spirit; against pantheism he fought to establish the truth of creation. At a time when the "idolatry of science" was universal he almost single handed broke down its idols of clay. When sesquipedalian transcendentalism was soaring ever higher into the realms of unreality, he never left for a moment the solid rock of experience. Like the scholastics he vindicated in all his works a sane dualism between matter and life, between brute and human, between soul and body, between knower and known, and, making allowances for frequent obscurities, even in his later works, between God and creature. Realism in knowledge he made once more respectable—despite the fact it agreed with common sense. In ethics he challenged and refuted the sociological vagaries and primitive mentality of Lévy-Bruhl and Durkheim, outlining a spiritualistic and objective, though inadequate theory of morals. About Bergson's most characteristic doctrine—which might be called "panmobilism"—and its relation with scholasticism—Maritain has this to say:⁶⁸

Il est aisé néanmoins d'apercevoir entre ces deux philosophies d'étranges correspondances, au point que beaucoup de thèses de M. Bergson pourraient être présentées comme des réfractions . . . de certaines thèses thomistes.

Actually, however, there are frequent defects; and the errors into which Bergson's teaching would logically lead are fundamental and serious. All of them may be traced to his disparaging opinion of the human intellect. Though he admits that the intellectualism of Aristotle is the "natural metaphysics of the human mind,"⁶⁹ his strictures against it are too sweeping. Many of his objections are valid against the intellectualism of Kant, but he shows a total lack of understanding of the thomistic conception of the dynamism and finality of judgment. His method of hesitant empiricism, commending with Bacon

⁶⁷ In the Introduction to the second edition of his *La Philosophie Bergsonienne* (Paris: Librairie Michel Rivière, 1930).

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 389.

⁶⁹ *L'Evolution Créatrice*, p. 22.

"lead to the soul, not wings," leaves no place for a theory of substance or of analogy, and thus excludes the wide world of metaphysical being which, even though it can be neither seen nor touched, is more real than the objects of sense.

Furthermore, the nature of Bergson's method seems to emphasize the struggle for truth rather than truth itself when it implies that metaphysical knowledge is never absolutely final but always perfectible. This savors of Lessing's:

If God held in his right hand the entire Truth, and in his left hand the single lifelong pursuit of it, although with the condition that I should ever and always be in error, and gave me the choice between them, I would in all humility reach for his left hand and say: Father, give me this; is not the pure Truth for Thee alone?

The philosopher must know not only that Truth itself is to be cherished, but must know also when he has grasped it and why he may rest in its possession with complete trust. All philosophy must have faith—faith in the inherent trustworthiness of its faculties; if it has not this, philosophy is futile. Philosophy must be humble—but humility knows truth when it sees it.

When Bergson died last year the report was circulated that he had become a Catholic. Several reasons for doubting the fact have since been proposed. It is said that he preferred not to forsake his persecuted brethren at the time of their greatest trial; and perhaps the words he once applied to Plotinus⁷⁰ may be said of him: "To him was given to see the promised land, but not to tread its soil." But there are no reasons for doubting his intentions. He remarked a few years ago: "Je trouve beaucoup de philosophie dans le dogme de la Communion des saints." Perhaps he is learning more now from one of that communion's shining lights, the subject of the next article. It would be interesting to be present at their *Quaestiones Disputatae*.

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⁷⁰ "Entrétien avec M. Bergson," *loc. cit.*

ST. THOMAS AND THE MODERN MIND

About twenty years ago M. Jacques Maritain embarked upon a search for "les racines et la première vertu germinative"¹ of the ideas which dominate our contemporary world. He found them in the thought of "three men" who, he said, "for very different reasons dominate the modern world and govern all the problems which torment it: a reformer of religion, a reformer of philosophy and a reformer of morality—Luther, Descartes and Rousseau."²

Once the doctrine of these "Three Reformers" was studied in the light of their influence on subsequent thinkers, M. Maritain's contention that these were the masters of the modern mind became clearly established. The initial surprise that Luther, Descartes and Rousseau should be chosen from among the whole company of modern philosophers as the men to whose teachings the roots of present-day thinking should be traced, gave way to a certain feeling of confusion that one had overlooked the obvious. Obvious it was when once it had been pointed out; but it was a veritable *coup de génie* to have discovered "la première vertu germinative" in the coalescence of influences emanating from this threefold source.

As a matter of fact, these several influences did coalesce in the philosophy of Immanuel Kant. He "stands at the meeting of the intellectual streams springing from these three men."³ From Descartes he inherited the conception of the independence of reason with respect to things; from Rousseau he inherited the conception of the independence of morality with respect to reason; from Luther he inherited the conception of the independence of religion with respect to authority. These ideas became the nucleus of the Kantian doctrine of transcendentalism in the realm of reason, autonomy in the realm of will and immanence in the realm of religion. And, by the genius and originality of his own method of *Kritik*, Kant raised the imposing structure of his system upon these foundations.

From that moment onward the Professor of Königsberg became the Pedagogue of Europe, the Maker of the Modern Mind. For, as

[Editor's Note: For the convenience of the readers, we have in some instances translated in the footnotes the Latin or French quotations of the text; such translation we have enclosed within brackets. If the translations are in any way inaccurate, we alone are responsible.]

¹ Jacques Maritain, *Trois Réformateurs* (Paris: Plon, 1925), p. 3.

² *Ibid.*, *Three Reformers* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1928), p. 4.

³ *Ibid.*

Cardinal Mercier said in his brilliant essay on *Le problème de la conscience moderne*,⁴ "with the exception of a certain number of Catholic philosophers and theologians, who remained faithful to their age-old tradition,⁵ the men who have orientated European thought for the last century and a half are permeated with the spirit of Kant." It is that spirit—the spirit of *Kritik*—which gave rise, though in different manners and with different results, to modern movements of thought as divergent as the idealism of Hegel, the materialism of Marx, the positivism of Comte, the intuitionism of Bergson, and the pragmatism of William James.⁶

Certain common convictions (for the most part of a negative character) discernible in the confusion of modern thought betray the permanent effect of Kantian influences upon the Modern Mind.

In the first place, metaphysics as a knowledge or science of what is, is ruled out *ab initio*; for, reason is universally regarded as a merely regulative agency whose sole function is to put our thoughts in order and arrange our concepts according to a definite pattern. It may be a dialectical pattern, as in Hegel and Marx; an empirical pattern, as in Comte and Mill; a pragmatic pattern, as in Bergson and James; or any other pattern which a particular philosopher deems fit and proper.⁷ But whatever the pattern, the method is invariably that of the *Kritik*, viz. to fix upon one pattern as the norm of all true knowledge (Kant so regarded the physics of Newton) and to organize all concepts in function of that pattern. The legislative function of reason⁸ thus dominates the speculative philosophy of the Modern Mind. Intellectual insight into the nature of things is universally questioned if not denied. Intuition is either restricted to the realm of ideas alone (as in idealism) or to sense-data alone (as in empiricism) or it is relegated to the irrational (as in Bergsonism) or repudiated altogether (as in pragmatism).

In the second place, modern ethical systems, though in many ways as divergent as the various systems of speculative philosophy, have a common ground in that they completely divorce the realm of morals

⁴ D. J. Cardinal Mercier, *Christianisme dans le monde moderne* (Paris: Perrin, 1919), p. 104.

⁵ Gilson has pointed out how not a few Catholic philosophers have been victims of Kantian spirit in their attempts to solve the problem of knowledge. Vide Etienne Gilson, *Réalisme thomiste* (Paris: Vrin, 1939), *passim*.

⁶ See the preceding articles in this symposium for a study of these systems.

⁷ The Logical Positivists prefer a grammatical or semantic pattern.

⁸ "Die Gesetzgebung der menschlichen Vernunft (Philosophie) hat zwei . . ." Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, Wilhelm Ed., (Leipzig, 1920), Bk. II, p. 423.

from the realm of knowledge in the strict sense. Moral consciousness is ultimate in this sphere. Whether its object be empirically explained in terms of pleasure, pain or utility, idealistically conceived as duty, law or liberty or pragmatically regarded as social feeling for the fitness of things, it is impossible to go beyond the ethical impulse itself or to analyse that moral urge by means of rational concepts. "Moral values," as they are currently denominated in ethical literature, belong to an autonomous realm, are not amenable to rational justification or subject to scientific investigation. They are rooted in the spontaneous impulse of the human will to pursue, in an utterly disinterested manner, the fullest measure of moral righteousness and freedom of spirit. The modern mind, in its conception of an autonomous moral order and in its conception of freedom reflects the influence of Kant's *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* and his *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten* in no unmistakable manner.

In the third place, religion for the modern mind rests upon a special and peculiar type of "experience" which fills a human need for intimate communion with God. There may be an unlimited variety of religious experience (as William James has noted) and the object of that experience, God, may be interpreted to be either a Personal Being or an Impersonal all-pervading Influence or an Ideal of self-realization or any other form of what Otto⁹ has called the "Numinous". But however diversely that Object may be characterized, the peculiar, ineffable, immanent, personal experience itself remains the ultimate basis of religious thought and practice and the sole ground upon which religious values may be estimated. Doctrines and creeds, beliefs and dogmas may or may not have religious significance, but whether they have or not does not alter the fact that religion is not ultimately either a matter of intellectual assent given to conceptual formulae or the practice of certain forms of worship. It is an immanent experience which needs and can have no justification beyond itself.

The world of thought created by the Modern Mind, in which metaphysical knowledge has no place, morality no rational ground and religion no basis but "experience" lies open to confusions of every sort. Confusion in philosophy; for, originality in devising new methods and systems for explaining facts or cleverly modifying older ones to suit the actual situation is prized more highly than the discovery of deeper significance in truths long since established or broader applications of well-known principles.¹⁰ A multiplicity of conflicting sys-

⁹ Cf. Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*, translated by John W. Harvey (Oxford University Press, 1929), Chapter II and *passim*.

¹⁰ For a lucid exposition of the two types of intellectual progress *vide* J. Maritain, *Sept. leçons sur l'être* (Paris: Téqui, s.d.), pp. 5-21.

tems inevitably results from such an attitude.¹¹ Confusion in the realm of morality; for, ethics which have no other foundation than moral sentiment may range from the most uncompromising rigour of the strictest puritanism to the utter laxity and wantonness of libertinism without there being any norm or standard according to which they may be either reasonably condemned or reasonably approved. Confusion in religion; for, where the criterion of the validity of religion is personal, immanent "experience", it may mean anything from the loftiest mysticism to the strangest vagaries of emotion.

Confusion is the most striking characteristic of the Modern Mind. And, whither that confusion has led us, no one living in this war-torn world has need to ask.¹²

What can Saint Thomas do to cure the confusion of the Modern Mind? *Sapientis est ordinare*.¹³ It would be but a futile (and a facile) triumph for Saint Thomas merely to refute the opinions of a Kant, a Hegel, a Marx or a Bergson. Obviously, if truth is to be served that must be done. But the real task of the contemporary philosopher who looks to Saint Thomas for light and guidance is far more important than that and far more arduous. It is nothing less than making order out of chaos in the world of thought. *Sapientis est ordinare*.

In his own day, Saint Thomas faced a similar situation, although, it must be admitted, a less tragic one, since in the Middle Ages Christian Theology and Christian Faith prevented the disorder prevailing in philosophy from spreading through the whole life and culture of the times as it has spread in our day.

Confronted with the tangle of conflicting philosophical doctrines current in the thirteenth century (doctrines stemming, for the most part, from Plotinus much as our modern systems stem from Kant¹⁴) Saint Thomas set bravely to work to put order into philosophical thinking. His first step (he was a very young man when he wrote

¹¹ Cf. E. Gilson, *Medieval Universalism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1937), p. 19. "As to philosophy, it is strictly true to say that today each philosopher has his own system, and that, far from being disturbed at the idea that his system is not accepted by anybody else, he rather rejoices in it. If he were satisfied with accepting as true what everybody holds to be true, he would not consider himself as original; nor would he be considered as such by the others."

¹² Current political and economic dislocations, culminating in the military threat of world conquest, are the ultimate effects of world-wide intellectual confusion and spiritual and moral deterioration." Quoted from the *Official Statement* issued by the Conference on Science, Philosophy, and Religion, August, 1942.

¹³ Cf. Aristotle, *Meta.*, A 982 a 17; St. Thomas, *In I Eth.*, (Pirotta Edition), lect. 1 n. 1. ["It is the office of the wise man to bring about order."]

¹⁴ Cf. A. C. Pegis, *St. Thomas and the Greeks* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1939).

the *De Ente et Essentia*) was to lay a firm foundation of metaphysics on the solid rock of natural reason, i.e., the native capacity of man to know what is *in rerum natura*. Upon that basis he then proceeded to raise the whole structure of philosophy. "Illud quod primo intellectus concipit quasi notissimum, et in quo omnes conceptiones resolvit, est ens"¹⁵ was no mere casual statement, but the positing of the permanent principle of all knowledge and the ultimate test of the validity of any and every philosophical doctrine.

Up to the time of Saint Thomas nobody had clearly grasped the true nature of metaphysics.¹⁶ Heirs to a long tradition of Neoplatonic thought, the contemporaries of Saint Thomas based their metaphysical thinking upon the necessity of *natures*; theirs was a metaphysics of essence. Intelligibility was the intrinsic constitutive of reality, and knowledge held primacy over being. [A position, as Pegis has well said, quite compatible and consistent with a Plotinian theory of the universe wherein the One (God) is beyond being and the many (the world of finite things) proceeds from the one by a process of dialectic (emanation), but quite repugnant to a world in which God is Being (*Ego sum qui sum*) and creatures proceed from Him through a free act of creating.]

To establish the true formal object of metaphysics in that atmosphere of Plotinian thinking was not the least of Saint Thomas' difficulties. Witness, for example, the sort of objections he had to answer in the first article of the first question of the *Quaestio Disputata de Veritate*, especially the third *Sed Contra*:

Praeterea. . . Boethius dicit in Libro de Hebdomadibus (in princ.): *In omnibus creaturis diversum est esse et quod est*. Sed verum sequitur esse rerum. Ergo verum diversum est a quod est in creaturis. Sed quod est, idem est quod ens. Ergo verum in creaturis est diversum ab ente. . . . Ad tertium dicendum, quod cum dicitur: *Diversum est esse, et quod est*, distinguitur actus essendi ab eo cui actus ille convenit. Ratio autem entis ab actu essendi sumitur, non ab eo cui convenit actus essendi; et ideo ratio non sequitur.¹⁷

But once the principle was established that metaphysics deals with *being as being*, that intelligibility is rooted in being and that knowl-

¹⁵ *De Ver.*, I, 1. ["That which the intellect conceives first and as most known and into which it resolves all its conceptions is being."]

¹⁶ Cf. Bernard J. Muller-Thym, "St. Thomas and the Recapturing of Natural Wisdom," *The Modern Schoolman*, vol. 18, n. 4 (May, 1941), p. 64 sq.

¹⁷ *De Ver.*, I, 1 ad 3. ["What is more, Boethius in his *Liber de Hebdomadibus* says: 'In all creatures the *to be* and that which is are different.' But the true is consequent upon the *to be* of things. Hence in creatures the true is different from that which is. But that which is is the same as being. Consequently, the true in creatures is different from being. . . . To the third difficulty we reply that when the *to be* and that which is are said to be different, the act of being is distinguished from that to which that act is due. But the very ratio of being is taken from the act of being, not from that to which the act of being is due. Therefore, the argument falls through."]

edge follows, not conditions, being, his major task was accomplished. Thence onward it was a question of ordering all thought in conformity with the order of being. This undertaking was, indeed, colossal; but once the concept of being was clearly settled upon as the basis of knowledge, the architectonic principle was achieved. When in pursuance of his purpose, Saint Thomas discerned and distinguished the four orders of being in relation to knowledge¹⁸—the order of things known by the intellect but not made nor ordered by it, the order made by the intellect in its own concepts, the order made by the intellect in the acts of the will and the order made by the intellect in external works (the speculative, the logical, the moral and the artistic orders, respectively)—the whole plan of the structure of philosophical wisdom was clear.

Each of these orders had to be studied patiently in great detail, the kinds and degrees of knowledge proper to each accurately investigated and described, the relations of one order to another carefully analysed and the relations of each and all these orders to the higher orders of theology, faith and supernatural wisdom clearly defined, and the whole enterprise conducted in close contact with really existing things. Such, of course was not the actual procedure followed by Saint Thomas; for, as a theologian, he did not set out to deal *ex professo* with the proper ordering of philosophical knowledge. But as occasion arose, he did elaborate on these various problems and left numerous discussions of them scattered up and down his works.

It is to this heritage of wisdom and knowledge that the philosopher of today has fallen heir. It is his to use in establishing order in contemporary thought and to expand by assimilating all the accretions with which the progress of science and mathematics in modern times has enlarged and enriched the scope of human knowledge. What Saint Thomas did in the maelstrom of conflicting doctrines current in the thirteenth century his disciples are called upon to do in the confusion of twentieth century thought. Nor, incidentally, should they be disappointed if their efforts do not meet with any more immediate success than did those of their mediaeval master. For, when Saint Thomas confronted the "Modern Mind" of the thirteenth century—the Latin Averroists and the Avicennianizing Augustinians who were the *moderni* of that age—with his brilliant synthesis of human knowledge, his contemporaries regarded him as a sort of ultra-modernist. Saint Thomas dazzled his age with the brilliance of his thought. And, it has taken centuries for even the keenest and best among his successors to accommodate the eyes of their intellects to the light of his wisdom. Even today there are some among the leaders of Christian thought who cannot yet see clearly in the light of

¹⁸ Cf. *In I Eth.*, (Pirota ed.), lect. 1, n. 1.

the principles of Saint Thomas; some even would have us look to the continuers of the old Avicennian and Plotinian tradition to accomplish what its earlier mediaeval votaries have failed to achieve. However, there are in the world today—providentially, no doubt, because our present needs are so desperately urgent—not a few splendid minds, perhaps more than ever before in history, whose understanding of the wisdom of Saint Thomas is profound and whose progressive spirit urges them ever onward to a fuller appreciation of the vitality and fecundity of his thought in the face of modern problems. Following the repeated injunctions of the Holy See from the time of Alexander IV (1254-1261) down to our own day, when Canon Law prescribes that in all ecclesiastical seminaries, "*Philosophiae rationalis ac theologiae studia et alumnorum in his disciplinis institutionem professores omnino pertractent ad Angelici Doctoris rationem, doctrinam et principia, eaque sancte teneant*,"¹⁹ they are prepared to restore the wisdom of Saint Thomas to the modern world and to enrich it with the authentic achievements of all great thinkers since his day: "*Vetera novis augere et perficere*."²⁰

That restoration is needed in every one of the four orders of knowledge which Saint Thomas has described, but it must begin with a restoration of the intelligence to its proper function, by a full and frank recognition of the native power of the mind to know—to see—and not merely to regulate observation, integrate perceptions and to systematize judgments and concepts. What it *sees* is what is, not its own ideas. Kant gave the *coup de grâce* to dogmatic idealism after Hume had mortally wounded it. Nothing could be more trenchant to the refutation of the error of the Cartesians than the prefaces to the *Kritik*. Unfortunately for Kant, however, he was under the impression that he was eliminating metaphysics and not merely the pseudo-metaphysics of the dogmatic idealists. After all, that was the only metaphysics he knew of through his predecessors Wolff and Leibniz, for as has been well said, Kant knew metaphysics "only by hearsay."²¹ Nevertheless in the opening sentences of the introduction to the *Kritik*, he more than suggests the true foundation upon which metaphysics rests, though he did not stop to investigate how the science of all things in their ultimate causes could be raised upon that foundation. The "spontaneous realism", if I may use such a

¹⁹ *Codex Juris Canonici*, n. 1366, paragraph 2. ["Let the professors above all direct the studies of rational philosophy and theology and the development of their students in these disciplines according to the spirit, doctrine, and principles of the Angelic Doctor; these let them hold as sacred."]

²⁰ Pope Leo XIII, *Aeterni Patris* (1879), paragraph 19.

²¹ Cf. E. Gilson, *The Unity of Philosophical Experience* (New York: Charles Scribners, 1937), p. 310.

term, which Kant confesses in that opening paragraph of his famous work (a realism which so many modern philosophers have dubbed "naïf" in order to discredit it) remains always at the bottom of the critical philosophy of Kant. "Que le monde extérieur existe, l'idéaliste critique se garde bien de le nier," says Gilson.

Comme disait Kant, puisqu'il y a des apparences, il faut bien qu'il y ait des choses qui apparaissent. C'est le bon sens même. . . . Au fond de tout idéalisme critique se trouve le réalisme naïf sur lequel il repose. La seule différence est qu'au lieu d'espérer l'élaboration rationnelle qui le rendrait intelligible à soi-même, ce réalisme est retranché dans sa naïveté essentielle. Le réalisme de l'idéaliste critique est naïf par vocation. Sans doute il n'y a pas de fissure à l'intérieure de sa philosophie, mais cette cohérence interne pré-suppose une rupture complète entre sa philosophie de la connaissance et la connaissance dont elle se dit la philosophie, puisque sa philosophie repose sur une connaissance de sens commun dont, en tant que philosophe l'idéaliste ne pense rien.²²

To take as the starting point that evidence of common sense, which Kant had seen but which he refused to make the object of his philosophical reflections, and enquire, not "what are the *a priori* conditions for the possibility of knowledge?" but "in what conditions does the fact of knowledge occur and (since *ab actu ad posse valet illatio*) what are the conditions which make that fact possible?" is to reach the true principle of the science of metaphysics—*being* confronting a human knower.

Could such a cure be effectively administered to the confused Modern Mind an important beginning would already have been made. But only a beginning. A severe discipline of thought, such as Maritain prescribes in his *Degrés du Savoir*²³ and Yves Simon in his *L'ontologie du connaître*,²⁴ must be imposed upon the mind which would rid itself of the confusion which infects speculative philosophy in our age.

Moreover, only one who has at least vicariously experienced the difficulties besetting the efforts of the human reason to understand the order of being which the intellect can know but which it does not

²² *Réalisme thomiste*, pp. 232, 234 sq. ["The critical idealist is careful not to deny that the exterior world exists. . . . Since, as Kant used to say, there are appearances of things, it is necessary as well that there be *things* which appear. Common sense tells us that. At the bottom of all critical idealism we find a naive realism upon which it rests. The only difference is that instead of hoping for and seeking a rational elaboration which would render it intelligible to itself, this realism is entrenched in its essential naïveté. The realism of a critical idealist is naive by its very vocation. Without a doubt there is no internal breach in his philosophy, but such internal coherence presupposes a complete break between his philosophy of knowledge and the knowledge which such a philosophy espouses. For his philosophy rests upon a knowledge springing from common sense, which the idealist in so far as he is a philosopher holds as naught."]

²³ J. Maritain, *Distinguer pour Unir ou Les Degrés du Savoir* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1932).

²⁴ Yves Simon, *L'ontologie du connaître* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1934).

make, through a serious study of the history of "philosophical experience," can proceed very far in the refining of his own philosophical reflections. To see, for example, that *mutatis mutandis*, the task of Saint Thomas in the thirteenth century was proportionately the same as that of the good philosopher today, namely, to set being free from its bondage to human knowledge and to build upon being (not upon *essence* or *form* or *idea*) the edifice of philosophical wisdom is to grasp the core of the problem of restoring order to contemporary thought; while to trace the fortunes of a philosophical idea through the vicissitudes which its own internal dynamism imposes upon its history in the minds of men is not only to get a picture of the changing panorama of the philosophico-historical landscape but also to realize at once, the inherent tendency of error towards confusion and chaos and the fecundity of truth in producing order, harmony and peace. "The history of philosophy is much more part of philosophy itself than the history of science is part of science,"²⁵ or, one may add, the history of any other intellectual discipline is part of that discipline.

History has shown how the ideas of morality expounded in the *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* and in the *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten* have followed devious, though inexorably logical, paths through the minds of Kant's successors, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Marx, Lenin, Comte, Mill, James, to issue in the inhuman theories of racism, class-conflict, statolatry, unfettered liberalism which have dominated the thought and conduct of contemporary society and have precipitated the cataclysm of war. To restore order in the realm of moral thought and conduct the practical reason must be given back its proper function, which is to know *being as end* and to discourse about the means to attain it,²⁶ not to investigate the possibility of moral law or to construct *a priori* a rational system of duties; and the will must once more be understood as a natural power of the soul, determined in respect to its appropriate adequate object, *being as end* (the good), though free to choose among the means to attain it, not as an autonomous source of absolute spontaneity, determinable only by the laws which it gives to itself. The whole progeny of misconceptions about liberty to which these Kantian doctrines have given birth must be eliminated and the problem of freedom rethought in function of the only principle upon which a truly human and rational ethics can be founded—the principle of that order which the understanding makes in the acts of the will. For, if *reason* is impotent to prescribe the norms and standards of moral conduct, both personal and social, what *reason* could one hope to give for condemning force,

²⁵ E. Gilson, *The Unity of Philosophical Experience*, Foreword, p. 3.

²⁶ Cf. Yves Simon, *Critique de la connaissance morale*, (Paris: Desclée de Bouwer, 1934).

cruelty and barbarism or for curbing licence or controlling liberty by law?

There is no philosophy but the true philosophy which can solve the practical problems of our day or stand up against the forces of error and evil rampant in the world of this twentieth century. Even that philosophy is weak, indeed, when unsupported by religion. Paradoxical as it may seem, reason, which all men have in common and which should therefore unite men in the harmony of truth, has never done so in the past.²⁷ How true it is that, in the last analysis, the acceptance of the first evidences of reason as the starting point of all true knowledge in philosophy involves a moral issue.²⁸

There is an ethical problem at the root of our philosophical difficulties; for men are most anxious to find truth but most reluctant to accept it. We do not like to be cornered by rational evidence, and even when truth is there, in its impersonal and commanding objectivity, our greatest difficulty still remains; it is for me to bow to it in spite of the fact that it is not exclusively mine, for you to accept it although it cannot be exclusively yours. In short, finding the truth is not so hard; what is hard is not to run away from the truth once we have found it.²⁹

Humility of intellect is required of the man who would submit his mind to the things of nature and learn from them; pride of intellect incites one to refuse that submission and to justify by theory and argument the attempt to dominate the universe by one's own thought and to impose upon reality the mode of being proper to our imperfect human knowledge. Only a reverence for the real such as religion inculcates can control that all too human proclivity. But a religion based solely in principle upon some immanent experience devoid of reasonable and reasoned grounds, a religion which cannot by any stretch of meaning be described as *rationabile obsequium*, is powerless to restrain pride of intellect, but, on the contrary, fosters the very individualistic independence of private conviction and thought which makes for revolt against objective truth and cuts thought off from the very things about which thought is concerned. In the restoration of order, religion, too, must be restored; else, little can be hoped for through the restoration of reason.

The wisdom of Saint Thomas can cure the Modern Mind but only if that cure is administered in the spirit of Saint Thomas. Despite

²⁷ Humana inquisitio propter imbecillitatem intellectus nostri est facilis ad errorem, et hoc etiam aperte ostenditur ex ipsis philosophis . . . vix duorum aut trium esset de his per omnia communis una sententia, cum tamen per fidem videamus in unam sententiam etiam plurimos convenire populos. St. Thomas, *In Boetii de Trinitate*, 3, 1 ad 3.

²⁸ E. Gilson, *Le réalisme méthodique* (Paris: Téqui, s.d.), p. 93.

²⁹ E. Gilson, *The Unity of Philosophical Experience*, p. 61.

the fact that when "he realized (in the height of the Averroistic controversy) that some might really wish Christ to go down before Aristotle, he fought with a battle-axe,"⁸⁰ or when he encountered such utter stupidity as of the philosopher who said that God was prime matter he used strong language, nevertheless, Saint Thomas normally preserved the greatest restraint in dealing with his adversaries. He never lost respect for the great minds with whom he differed but regretted, rather, that they had not been able to see the truth. Noting the failure of Averroes, Alexander of Aphrodisius and Aristotle to find the right answer to the question of man's final destiny, he says: "In quo satis apparet quantam angustiam patiebantur hinc inde eorum magna ingenia."⁸¹

But, not only was he gentle and considerate in dealing with the men who erred, but he was scrupulous to give them credit for whatever was valuable and true in what they had to say. His works are full of references to Greek, Arabian and Jewish authors, with whose philosophy he is in thorough disagreement, but whose statements he very frequently quotes with generous approval.

In the midst of the confusion of modern thought there are likewise many valid insights. Great and powerful minds have given lifetimes to the elaboration of vast and comprehensive, though erroneous, systems. Though the history of modern philosophy is strewn with their failures, much that is perennially true lies tangled and distorted in the meshes of their thought and many fresh, though partial, visions of the truth emerge through their reflections. These must not be overlooked nor should we fail in gratitude to those who have revealed them.

Quia in eligendis opinionibus vel repudiandis, non debet duci homo amore vel odio introducentis opinionem sed magis ex certitudine veritatis; ideo dicit (Aristotelis) quod oportet amare utrosque, scilicet, eos quorum opinionem sequimur et eos quorum opinionem repudiamus. Utrique enim studuerunt ad inquirendam veritatem et nos in hoc adjuverunt.⁸²

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⁸⁰ G. K. Chesterton, *St. Thomas Aquinas* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1933), pp. 167, 108.

⁸¹ *Sum. c. Gent.*, III, 48, circa fin.

⁸² *In XII Meta.*, (Cathala ed.), lect. 9, n. 2566. ["For in accepting or rejecting opinions, one should be led, not by love or hate of the one introducing the opinion, but rather by the certitude which truth begets. Hence Aristotle says that we should love both, namely, those whose opinion we follow and those whose views we reject. For both set themselves to the pursuit of truth, and in that they have both helped us."]

BOOK REVIEWS

THE EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF NATIONAL SOCIALISM
BY G. F. KNELLER

Yale University Press, 1941. Pp. viii + 299, \$3.50.

Other books have been written describing the effects on German schools of the nightmare that is Naziism. Such were Erika Mann's *Education of Barbarians*, or Gregor Ziemer's *Education for Death*, both powerfully moving documents portraying the horrors of the Nazi invasion of German schools; both suffered, pardonably to be sure, from the impassioned ardor of the authors. Here, however, is an objective study of the impact of National Socialism on the schools. Education in Germany today is treated here impersonally, objectively, without passion, without rhetoric "as a phenomenon, as a link in the chain of ideas." Herein lies the effectiveness of the book.

As far as the present reviewer knows, this is the most completely documented work in the English language dealing with the Nazi ideology of German education. The ideas back of the terror are here expertly set forth; the work is the outgrowth of a doctoral dissertation at Yale University and represents enormous labor on the part of the author; his bibliography alone covers twenty-six pages. Only one who has attempted to keep *au courant* with the *Volk und Rasse*, *Blut und Boden*, and *Kultur* nonsense that has appeared in German pedagogical literature since Hitler's rise to power can appreciate the magnitude of the task accomplished. Krieck, Rust, Bäumler, Rosenberg, the ecstatic hierophants of the New Education, even the demonic ravings of der Führer himself—for it must not be forgotten that *Mein Kampf* is a book of extreme pedagogic significance—are examined carefully and with minute care. There are of course a host of others, contemporaries as well as predecessors from Hegel's time down through the period preceding Hitler, all of whom have played their part in building the fantastic structure that is Nazi education.

Perhaps the best chapter in the book is Chapter IV, "Backgrounds," where Dr. Kneller laboriously sets out to disentangle the "ideas" that went into the fashioning of National Socialistic education. He disagrees with Professor Kandel of Columbia University who calls it—rightly to this reviewer's mind—a blend of Fichte, Hegel, Treitschke, Nietzsche, Bernhardt, and the "megalomania of a group drunk with power." Dr. Kneller does not believe that the roots of National Socialism are so deeply sunk in nineteenth century idealism. Yet the concept of the *Herrenvolk*, the supremacy of German *Kultur*, the theory that there are no other gods than the omnipotent State, all accepted by the apostles of Nazi education, were inherent from the beginning in German idealistic philosophy with its monistic leanings. In fact, it may be said to have been started by Martin Luther; Fichte and Heine called it a result of the Reformation, a thesis carefully

presented in a recent work of William M. McGovern, *From Luther to Hitler*. At all events this reviewer prefers to side with Professor F. W. Foerster who says categorically that from Fichte to Hitler "the line runs straight."

In his chapters on the "Concept of a State," "The State and Religion in Education," "The Road of German Youth," a Catholic must regret that the author did not see fit to develop the efforts made by Christian German writers, both Catholic and Protestant, to combat the pagan ideas held by the Nazis in these important areas. Cardinal Faulhaber is mentioned once; Pastor Niemoeller not at all. In fact the greatest defect of the book lies in its failure to take into adequate account the heroic struggle of adversaries of Naziism on the ideological front.

I must confess that I was puzzled by the concluding chapter of the book. "It is, of course, impossible to tell at this stage what education resulting from a policy of national-mindedness and resting on a political situation will contribute to civilization." This reviewer may be incredibly naïve, but his conviction is firm and unshakable that Nazi education can contribute nothing to civilization, can only lead to utter barbarism, to an eradication from the minds and hearts of the German people every sentiment of our common Christian culture.

WILLIAM J. MCGUCKEN

PLATO'S THEOLOGY by Friedrich Solmsen

Cornell University Press, 1942. Pp. ix + 201, \$2.50.

Dr. Solmsen's distinguished reputation as a classical scholar is amply justified and sustained by the present book. Into the complex matter of Plato's theology, "in the broad sense, i.e., convictions concerning the nature and activities of the deity" (p. 39), he enters with the requisite angelic caution. His thorough knowledge of all the relevant passages in Plato and of their various contexts is manifest, as is also a very broad acquaintance with the learned discussions of the several points at issue, in which the fine work of many American and British scholars is given its due recognition. This great mass of speculation he reduces to a clear and orderly exposition of Plato's statements, their inter-relation, and significance. Many original clarifications of intricate points add to the value of the study: It deserves to replace entirely Paul Elmer More's confused and inconclusive *Religion of Plato*. Even Plato students who know "small Latin and less Greek" are considerably provided for, and will find few important quotations un-Englished.

The first part of the book supplies a brilliant summary of the nature and extensive evolution of Greek theology prior to Plato. This makes us realize how critical was the situation Plato faced, and what a crucial innovation he made in first seeking to re-establish individual and civic religion on a philosophical basis. For he is the originator of natural theology, and of religious orthodoxy founded on

an appeal to rational proof for a given belief, rather than to tradition or the caprice of the incumbent ruler.

Plato's explicit warning in *Timaeus* 28c that "if the father and maker of all this Universe is past finding out, and even if we found him, to tell of him to all men would be impossible" is kept always in mind. His cautious, pioneering speculation on the problems of divine realities are not, in consequence, forced into a speciously integrated and complete system. Plato is shown to approach the issue from various angles, with resultant modifications in terminology and procedure. Separate chapters elucidate his treatment of theology by way of expurgation of old misconceptions in the national myths, from considerations of the metaphysics of movement and becoming, of cosmic teleology and the Demiurge, and the influence of the Mystery-religions in questions of eschatology and the nature of the soul. There follows a detailed analysis of the too often neglected tenth book of the *Laws*, where Plato first works out the whole issue in a formal and systematic way. The author then shows how Plato restores on this new foundation the old civic piety undermined by rationalistic and "scientific" doctrines. A concluding chapter traces certain basic influences of Plato's theological teaching on later religious systems.

It emerges that God for Plato remained to the end a mediator between the world of perfect Being (the Ideas) and the world of mutation, imperfection, and becoming (the universe). He is thus the ultimate cause of all order and goodness and life in the world, a personal Divinity and kindly Providence, but not the summation of all Being, nor, as a mediator, identical with the Idea of the Good. He is the chief self-moving Mover, but not unmoved First Mover. Still, neither is He a chill Aristotelian Self-thinking Thought, for the concept of "a self-centred and introspective goodness . . . is entirely alien to Plato" (p. 152). God is spoken of in some places as Mind, in others as Soul. Dr. Solmsen shows that these two approaches are distinct, the former to explain order in the world, the latter life and movement. Only in the *Laws* does Soul fully embrace both notions; the Demiurge is strictly not a soul, as most commentators assume (pp. 113-114). The pantheistic concept of the World-Soul is shown to be qualified by the provision at *Laws* 899a that it may move the universe otherwise than by immanent operation.

One is puzzled by the statements about the Demiurge on pp. 103 and 154, because the author does not make enough of the qualifications he himself admits should be considered. Luckily, the very admission gives us the key to the difficulties. Unfortunately, the author does not discuss the metaphysical issues on the ultimate extent of the divine creatorhood in *Laws* 10 (Plato's reasoning there is valid, but it does not extend to intrinsic order, so that it proves only a Rational Designer, not a Creator in the existential plane).

These are indeed few faults amid much that is excellent. There is a fine index, and the whole study is executed with a breadth of mind and dignity of style befitting discussion of so great a writer as Plato. It is an admirable book.

RAYMOND V. SCHODER

A CATHOLIC PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

by John D. Redden and F. A. Ryan

Bruce Publishing Company, 1942. Pp. xii + 591.

At the San Francisco meeting of the National Society for the Study of Education in February 1942, the first problem discussed was that of the philosophy of education. The growing interest in the principles underlying educational thought and method was very evident there. Today educators are beginning to realize, probably better than ever before, how much they are thrown onto the resources of philosophy during these muddled times of perplexity and doubt as to what means and ends should prevail inside and outside the school.

Catholic philosophy of education has not always been clearly stated in manuals and treatises on Catholic education, yet it has always been the basis of Catholic instruction in the school and in the home. The *practice* of Catholic philosophy has been more universal than the *theory*. The first rather full treatment of Catholic philosophy and education in English was the translation of Dr. DeHovre's *Essai de Philosophie Pédagogique* by Father Jordan of the Catholic University in 1930. However, it was not until the later 30's that a number of Catholic writers busied themselves in presenting the philosophy of the educational system that is Catholic heritage.

The present work by two professors of Education at Fordham University is of most recent date. Their aim is primarily to offer Catholic normal schools, colleges, and universities a textbook for philosophy of education courses. Their aim, I should say, has been fulfilled in a scholarly way. The sources that have been examined and critically analysed are legion in number. Almost every page of the text carries quotations from authors who are cited for their authority in the philosophical problems touching upon the student, the curriculum, or the educational agencies.

A strong thread of Catholic thought winds through the entire first book, some 390 pages. The philosophy, to a great extent, is woven about an exceptionally good descriptive definition of education:

Education is the deliberate and systematic influence exerted by the mature person upon the immature through instruction, discipline, and the harmonious development of all the powers of the human being, physical, social, intellectual, aesthetic, and spiritual, according to their essential hierarchy, by and for their individual and social uses, and directed toward the union of the educand with his Creator as the final end (p. 23).

The authors' development of that definition could scarcely leave anyone in doubt as to the Catholic teaching in the philosophy of education. The discussion of Catholic principles with short references to modern philosophies is the subject matter of the first book. Naturalism, socialism, nationalism, communism, and experimentation are reserved for the second book. This method of first explaining Catholic philosophy is in keeping with the title of the book, and follows the principle of first presenting the truth.

The second book ends with an able and timely exposition of "Education for Democracy," a subject poorly understood in our own day. The meaning of democracy is treated as understood (1) before the deliberations of the Founding Fathers of the United States and (2) from the Founding Fathers to the present time. The Constitution of the United States as formulated by the signers definitely followed the Scholastic interpretation of democracy. Only after the Constitution was adopted did Jefferson begin to disseminate his doctrine of democracy founded on the social contract theories of Locke and Rousseau. Modern distorted views of democracy are probably due to a mingling of the Jeffersonian, Jacksonian, Wilsonian, and Scholastic interpretation.

Though *A Catholic Philosophy of Education* might well be used as a complete and clear textbook, it seems to have a greater value as a source book or supplementary reader in the philosophy of education. For the many quotations diminish interest in the clear passages written by the authors themselves.

R. J. BISHOP

DIVINE PROVIDENCE AND THE PROBLEM OF EVIL
A TRANSLATION OF ST. AUGUSTINE'S *De Ordine*
by Robert P. Russell, O.S.A.

Cosmopolitan Science and Art Co., Inc., 1942. Pp. iv + 189, \$2.00.

This book is two things. It is the Latin text of St. Augustine's *De Ordine*. It is also an English translation of the text.

St. Augustine wrote much in the first ardor of his conversion. He wanted all the world to know the good thing to which he had fought his way. He also wanted most particularly that those whom his influence had led astray might be brought back to the Truth. Since the question of the origin and nature of evil had unsettled him when a callow freshman at college, in this book he discusses evil and God's Providence, making reparation for his own superbly adolescent desertion of the Catholic Faith, and hoping, no doubt, that other youths would not be as silly, as unreasonable, as gullible as he had been.

He tells us that he had in mind a grander work than the one he eventually released for publication. He had planned to go thoroughly into the business of evil and Providence. But—and here is where the second part of the book assumes its significance—he found that the young minds with whom he was conducting this Dialogue were not well-trained in the way of philosophizing. Consequently, he did what was most practical. He devoted the second half of the *De Ordine* to a treatise for young men on how to study and what to study.

The modern freshman in our Colleges would be immensely profited if he were to be given this book as a text, even as a religion text. There is nothing in it that is not apposite. It was written out of the mouths and minds of a group of alert, disputatious, talented, and restless young men. It shows you how they think, and how and where and why they fail to think. It shows you how they feel and, likewise, how and what and where they ought and ought not to feel.

It stings—so true it is. It inspires—so lovable is the person of Augustine, and so likeable are the members of the cast. Any student who cares to make himself a better student ought to read this book.

So much for the contents.

As a translation the book is satisfactory but not perfect. No one has yet translated Augustine into English, though I believe that Healy comes as close as can be, for his words are gorgeous and his sentences magnificent; but even Healy is not quite Augustine. Only Newman, I believe, could have really translated Augustine. Hence Father Russell ought not to be discouraged because his work lies open to criticism. Anyone's would. I find myself, for example, dissatisfied when the whimsical, all-boy Licentius is made in the translation to "simper." Boys of the stamp of Licentius would not be caught, dead or alive, "a-simpering." I suppose that in substance my lack of enthusiasm for the translation is due to the fact that the "nuances" are not reproduced.

But Father Russell must be congratulated. He has done a man-sized job. And he has made available for the first time in English one of the most useful and one of the most attractive of the early works of St. Augustine.

BAKEWELL MORRISON

INTELLECTUAL AMERICA by Oscar Cargill

The Macmillan Company, 1941. Pp. xiii + 777, \$5.00.

The sub-title of Mr. Cargill's work, *Ideas on the March*, is well chosen, for in the Foreword he tells us that it is a study of the impact of ideologies on the American mind and spirit during the past two decades or so. "Such a study deserves a new name, and for it I propose a new word—IDEODYNAMICS; the descriptive study of ideologies and of the results of the forces which they exert." The scale of the project is so vast that it is difficult to judge at once how well the writer has succeeded, but we are certain that he has produced a very interesting book.

Dealing chiefly with literature and philosophies, Mr. Cargill considers French Decadence, German Absolutism, English Liberalism, literary Naturalism, despair, and decadence leading to Primitivism and, later, to the cynical Intelligentsia, ending with a thorough evaluation of the effect of Freudianism on American writers. Obviously, Mr. Cargill's range of reading has been vast and few informed observers of the present scene would disagree greatly with his general conclusions, though exception might be taken to a specific judgment here or there, as, for instance, that *Lazarus Laughed* is the greatest modern drama, or that "Euclid alone has looked on Beauty bare" is little short of perfection in the sonnet.

Great responsibility is laid upon Poe as a main fount of French decadence and the school of Baudelaire, which in turn greatly influenced British and American poets and led, eventually, to the present cult of unintelligibility. Though he thinks *The Waste Land* the greatest poem of the twentieth century, he neglects utterly to buttress this highly challenging view with reasons.

Mr. Cargill's style is vigorous rather than polished or subtle. Infrequently, he handles syntax carelessly. The arrangement of the material is as orderly as the heterogeneity of the phenomena examined permits, but the book is somewhat lacking in perspective. This is, no doubt, also due to another unfortunate difficulty inherent in the very nature of his problem: the necessity of assessing severally many movements which were going on at practically the same time, since the period studied covers only the past twenty-five years. Were it not that every page is interesting, we would suggest that it would have profited by condensation. But the half burlesque account of the career of H. L. Mencken, a very successful parody of Mencken's style in his heyday, is priceless. On second thought, let there be no condensation.

LOUIS F. DOYLE

PHILOSOPHY FOR THE MILLIONS by J. A. McWilliams, S.J.

The Macmillan Co., 1942. Pp. 206, \$2.00.

This book comes from the pen of an experienced teacher and philosopher. His smoothly flowing style is the fruit of his many writings especially in the form of contributions to periodicals, while his tangibly concrete thought is the consequence of the numerous lectures and discussions in which he has presented the notions of Scholastic philosophy to the non-academic mind.

The title is apropos. And the book must be judged from the end it proposes; and this it attains with excellence. In it are paraded the many profound truths of sane and correct philosophy, not accoutred in cap and gown but in the costumes that will make Jack and Bill recognize them as pals. To write on abstract subjects for the many untrained, and at the same time to avoid the errors of superficiality, is no mean accomplishment.

In judging a book of this kind, not only must the purpose be kept in mind, but also the necessary practical limitation of size. The author must choose what he thinks his millions of readers desire or ought to know (and in this case the selection seems appropriate); but there ensues the distressing impossibility of proving statements that really call for proof. And so I can easily understand why dissidents will be nettled at the facile manoeuvres with which their idols are cast into the ashcan. But in the selection itself there is one point that evokes my dissent, and that is the omission of an explicit consideration of the natural law. Much is made to depend on it, but nowhere is its meaning formally stated or its existence proved. This is unfortunate, for many readers understand it to be the law that held sway in Hobbes' non-existent "state-of-nature," or just simply do not know what it is, except that it serves as a convenient warrant for saying that this ought to be done and that ought not to be done.

But the book is a contribution to human welfare: it presents an easily understandable interpretation of the meaning of human life; it shows why life is serious, yet eminently worth living.

STEPHEN J. RUEVE

MEDIEVAL HUMANISM by Gerald G. Walsh, S.J.

The Macmillan Company, 1942. Pp. ix + 103, \$1.00

Father Walsh's contribution to the Christendom Series is provocative for all its small compass. Its merit and its only defect lie parallel: an extreme condensation of that mighty tradition which is Christian Humanism. This treatment undoubtedly gives a broad view of the whole terrain and illumines many of the dark points so conspicuous in the typical historical treatment of medieval culture. But yet it suffers, albeit unavoidably, from some slight inaccuracy of implication and from the wholesale departmentalization of the forces and paths of culture. We would take issue with the statement that St. Augustine completed the synthesis of Greece and Christianity, because his philosophy is not the complete Christian philosophy, but only a major orientation. While the "disputatio" was *the method* of medieval scholasticism, it should be noted that the intellectual integrity of Thomism is no mere accretion of virile theses which have survived disputation into a crystallized system. It seems too that the author could have made stronger the case for integral Christian Humanism as truly the case of culture versus chaos.

But it must not be assumed that the whole work is too general, nor even merely directive. It does possess the eminent quality of true perspective, rare in all books but especially in those focused on the lights and shadows of the panoramic medieval intelligence. Surely all who desire to witness the weaving of those threads of spiritual inheritance which alone can make whole the rent garment of modern thought will desire to tarry at times and take in the full weight of Father Walsh's words. Above all be it noted that his centralization of Dante as the living synthesis of Christian thought, emotion and love, as the poet approaching sanctity through vision, will warm the heart of the stiffest pedant. If there is one theme throughout the book it is that of the essential *unity of vision* as the soul of Christian Humanism. It is an unfortunate commentary on the vicarious mentality of the times to see that Greek words must now be transliterated into italic type; yet even this reflection fades before the light of the new-flowering interest in the culture that Greece made human and Christ made divine.

JOSEPH COLLINS

PHASES OF AMERICAN CULTURE

by Jesuit Philosophical Association of the Eastern States

Holy Cross College Press, 1942. Pp. 83.

This edition of several papers read at the annual convention of the Jesuit Philosophical Association of the Eastern States, is valuable for its clear, yet profound, presentation of the philosophy underlying past and present phases of American Culture. No balanced evaluation of the American way of life since colonial days can be formulated, unless one weighs the various philosophical influences which combined and are combining to make up the American mentality. Colonial culture

and political thought were the product of a Protestant, yet definitely Christian, mind. Despite their revolt against Catholic philosophy, the colonial founders accepted the Thomistic doctrine that society is natural to man and that civil authority is from the natural law. The Declaration of Independence expressed their belief in God, the sacredness of the human personality, the inherent equality and liberty of man, the nature of government to protect inherent rights, and other basic tenets. So it was from the European Catholic Scholastic tradition that the colonists drew to justify their establishment of a new and independent government. But Rousseau, who had reverted to the notion of an artificial society and of authority as a necessary evil, was led to conclude that civil rights are of human and not Divine creation. Rousseau's ideas later influenced even Jefferson, the author of the Declaration. From that time to the present day, that doctrine has been developed to its logical conclusions and has begotten the anti-Christian consequences of a denial of absolute right and truth. Our social, literary, educational, and philosophical culture, which is essentially naturalistic and positivistic, has been undermining political and juridical institutions drawn from Christian and metaphysical origins. Democratic institutions can hardly survive upon such foundations. The influence of the late Justice Holmes in juristic philosophy, of Dewey's pragmatism in education, of Emerson in literature, of Paine in political thought, and today of Frankfurter in judicial interpretations of the Bill of Rights, as well of other American thinkers in their fields have paved the way for an uncontested usurpation of that for which the Revolutionary Americans shed their blood.

The writers of these papers are men of scholarly repute and authorities in their respective fields. Their objective presentation should do much to stimulate clear thinking and a return to the "medieval feeling for the universal character of truth. Do we believe that truth is one? Upon our answer, hangs the future of the mind and what is left of liberty."

JOSEPH PATRICK FLANNER

INTRODUCTION TO LOGIC AND TO THE METHODOLOGY OF THE
DEDUCTIVE SCIENCES by Alfred Tarski

Oxford University Press, 1941. Pp. xviii and 239.

The Polish and Germans versions of this work appeared some years ago; the present edition is an enlargement of those earlier editions. The book is divided into two unequal parts, the first comprising approximately two-thirds of the book. In Part I, Professor Tarski presents the elements of logic and of the deductive method. There is a chapter on the use of variables with discussions on different logistic functions; another on sentential calculus, truth-tables, and the signification of the rules of inference. The third chapter presents a discussion of the concept of identity in logic, arithmetic and geometry; in this chapter some elementary notions concerning semantics are also presented. Subsequent chapters deal with the theory of classes, the theory of relations, and deductive method—this last with some detail. Part II consists in an application of the principles and concepts discussed in the first section to the construction of an elementary deductive system of arithmetic.

THE REPUBLIC OF PLATO translated by Francis M. Cornford
Oxford University Press, 1941. Pp. xxvii + 356, \$3.00.

This fine translation of the *Republic* has several distinctive features to set it apart from its predecessors. Professor Cornford abandons the division into ten "books" based merely on the length of ancient papyrus rolls, and substitutes a more organic division according to the thought into six parts embracing forty chapters. Each chapter has a short introduction clarifying the trend of the argument; further explanatory guidance is provided in brief but useful footnotes. The language is occasionally compressed into a form more readily grasped by an English reader, through omission of some of the formulae of assent spoken to Socrates by the others without advancing the thought, and by omission of a few sections such as corroborative examples or quotations repeating the same point; such omissions are acknowledged by a note at the place in question. Technical terms are well rendered, and the whole version is idiomatic rather than literal.

The English style is vigorous, supple, quite natural, and up-to-date. It could not well be characterized as R. S. Stanier has pithily appraised the famous Jowett translation: ". . . flattening out the delicate and significant traceries of Plato . . . into one solid macadam of Victorian orotundity" (*Greece and Rome* 10.102). Cornford gives, in fact, a total impression which is rather close to that gained from the original, though necessarily, like any translation, falling far short of the splendid rhythm, exquisite word-use, and remarkably delicate spiritual atmosphere of this masterpiece of artistic Greek. For those who are willing, or forced, to forego these refinements of Plato's incomparable style and thereby the fulness of his thought, Professor Cornford's sensitive translation can be highly recommended.

RAYMOND V. SCHODER

CONSPECTUS COSMOLOGIAE by J. A. McWilliams, S.J.

Second Edition, 1942. Pp. 71, \$0.50.

The first edition of the *Conspectus Cosmologiae* was planographed in 1937. The second edition, while the manner of treatment and general approach to the study of natural philosophy remains unchanged, is an improvement in its neat format and clear, legible print. This book is the result of considerable experience in teaching cosmology; what was found, in the author's opinion, of little value in larger textbooks and studies has been omitted. He has retained only the principal theses, stripping from them cumbersome discussions and historical data. "Since there is disagreement between teachers as to certain principles . . . , this *Conspectus* so presents the common body of doctrine that each professor in amplifying this synopsis for his students, can at the same time adapt it to the tenets of whatever particular school he may follow" ("Introductio," p. 4; translation ours). Objections adduced by modern scientists as regards the various theses are answered clearly and briefly. The book is divided as follows: I: *De Ordine*; II: *De Mundo in Genere*; III: *De Extensione et Duratione*; IV: *De Activitate*; V: *De Proprietatibus Specificis*; VI: *De Constitutione Essentiali Corporum (De Materia et Forma)*.

Written in Latin, the book should make a profitable text, especially for seminary students whose course of studies ordinarily allows only one semester to be devoted to cosmological questions.

FRANCISCAN STUDIES by Marion Habig, O.F.M., Editor

Published by the Franciscan Educational Conference, St. Bonaventure College, St. Bonaventure, N. Y., (New Series, Volume I, No. 1, March 1941). \$5.00 per annum.

With this, its twenty-second volume, the *Franciscan Studies* becomes a new quarterly review. Hitherto, the *Studies* have been in the form of monographs appearing irregularly. Assisting the Editor is Father Thomas Plassmann, O.F.M., as Managing Editor, and there is a large advisory board of prominent American Franciscan scholars, including Capuchins and Conventuals. The journal will be devoted to theology, philosophy, history, social sciences, education, literature and art, psychology and natural sciences. The articles in this first number are a fine indication of the scholarship which the Friars Minor of the United States can bring to these fields. Philosophers will be particularly interested in the initial installment of Father P. Boehner's edition of the *Centiloquium*, sometimes attributed to William of Ockham. The work is of very doubtful authenticity, in the judgment of Father Boehner. Another valuable feature, to be continued in future issues, is the *Scotistic Bibliography*, 1929-1939, begun by Father Grajewski. This is a much needed aid to research in mediaeval thought. *Franciscan Studies*, as a quarterly, will be heartily welcomed by American mediaevalists and, with the present disruption of the schedules of many European journals, will offer a new medium of publication for Franciscan scholars.

VERNON J. BOURKE

AN INTRODUCTORY MANUAL IN PSYCHOLOGY by Joseph J. Ayd, S.J.

Fordham University Press, 1941. Pp. x + 161, \$1.50.

It was after Father Ayd's failure to find an adequate text for his purpose—lectures in psychology at the *Mount Hope Retreat School of Psychiatric Nursing*—that he determined to supply the need himself. He has done so rather admirably in his *Introductory Manual in Psychology*. The book combines in brief compass the elements of Scholastic Psychology with the basic concepts of Empirical Psychology. Vegetative, sensitive, and rational life are treated in order, with the various scientific aspects assigned to their proper place; thus under the heading of sensation, the physiology, psychology and pathology of the senses are discussed; the explanation and refutation of Freudian psycho-analytic doctrine find their way into a chapter on the phenomena involved in sleep; the discussion of emotional abnormalities is linked with that of the sense appetite, and that of mental abnormalities with the treatment of intellect and will.

While some of the author's conclusions might be challenged in some Scholastic quarters, and while the doctrine on specifically human endowments seems rather inadequately developed, the substantial Scholastic doctrine is presented with lucidity and interest.

The bibliography is good, and an excellent glossary-index will do yeoman's service for the student who is unfamiliar with the language of the schools, medical or philosophical. *An Introductory Manual in Psychology* is a contribution to the Psychiatry which is based—as it should be based—on a true concept of human nature.

J. C. McKENNA

THE DICTIONARY OF PHILOSOPHY *edited by* Dagobert D. Runes
Philosophical Library, 1942. Pp. 343, \$5.00.

In a philosophic dictionary it seems necessary that the meanings of terms should be arranged not according to some median signification but according to the authors that used them. If in the present work this procedure had been carried out in a more uniform way, the dictionary would be a useful instrument. The definition given for eternity, for example, manifests this defect of attempting to assign a common denominator—a task surely impossible for terms of modern philosophers. And in the same way there are many inaccuracies under the nondescript heading, Scholasticism. Granted that there are Scholastic philosophers, is there such a thing as Scholasticism? The perusal of the explanation given under such terms as *act*, *analogy*, *form*, *cognition*, and the like, will show that such a procedure is hopelessly confusing.

In general, the editors would have done better if they had made more of an attempt to give a short concise definition with an explanation and description following it rather than embedding the definition in a lengthy explanation. Some of the historical sections of the dictionary are quite good, and there are other redeeming features. The task was gigantic and success could not be hoped for in the first attempt.

VINCENT F. DAUES

FROM COPERNICUS TO EINSTEIN
by Hans Reichenbach, *translated by* Ralph B. Winn
Alliance Book Corporation, 1942. Pp. 123, \$2.00.

The author describes this as an introduction to the great problems of space and motion. It is a very clear and readable account of the change in astronomical views wrought through the work of Copernicus, Kepler, and Newton, leading up to a discussion of ether, the relativity of motion, the special and the general theory of relativity. Popular in so far as it presents the matter in simple, lucid language, the book does not shy away from the more difficult aspects of the subject. Though obviously an enthusiast for relativity, the author is fair and rather objective. There is, on the whole, a pleasing absence of speculations concerning the more bizarre consequences, real or supposed, of relativity. Place is given, however, to a discussion of how according to the theory, one might conceivably cheat time by travelling in a ship of space to Mars, and, after many years, return but slightly aged to greet a twin brother now grown very old. The author, like so many relativists, seems to be unaware that the Michelson-Morley experiment and the Morley-Miller experiment were not entirely negative; the positive result was merely much less than had been expected. The ether drift found by Miller in his elaborate series of observations (1921-1925) has not been explained or explained away.

There is reason for coupling Copernicus and Einstein together. For just as Copernicus wrought a revolution in our astronomical views, so Einstein, through his theory of relativity, "the most magnificent achievement of modern physics," is destined to work a complete revolution in our views of physics and of natural science. "It was difficult for all of us . . . to understand Einstein's theory." The newer knowledge seems incomprehensible at first view but "one hundred years from now it will be accepted as self-evident." This prediction seems to mark a new high in optimism. The book is most attractively produced and the translation seems to have been well done.

JAMES I. SHANNON

PLATO ON THE TRIAL AND DEATH OF SOCRATES (EUTHYPHRO,
APOLOGY, CRITO, PHAEDO) Translated By Lane Cooper

Cornell University Press, 1941. Pp. xiv + 200, \$2.00.

"The unexamined life is not worth living" (*Apology* 38a), the motto on the title page, seems, from this book, to be verified in a high degree in the case of Lane Cooper himself, who evidently has probed deeply into the literary and artistic mysteries of life.

The general introduction shows the relation of these four dialogues to each other, but, unfortunately, not to the rest of Plato's works. Then Professor Cooper traces briefly the origin of literary forms in Greek Literature and shows the dependence of the literary-philosophical dialogue upon epic poetry, drama, and the mime. The perfection of the Platonic dialogue, its influence, its various components (*logos, ethos, dianoia, lexis, muthos*), and its emotional and intellectual effect ("As a stimulus, Plato is better than wine," p. 12) are discussed in that order.

The Introductions (which are all too brief) to the individual dialogues have the freshness and originality we have learned to look for in Professor Cooper's writings. By his emphasis on the differences (p. vii) between Socrates and Christ rather than on the similarity, by his discussion of the "quest of a man" (p. 47), and by his demonstration that Plato in teaching "respect for the laws . . . has a special message for the nations of our troubled times" (p. 81), Professor Cooper easily captures the reader's interest.

Professor Cooper presents well Plato and his influence in the educational and aesthetic fields. Plato's philosophical contributions, however, (for example, the importance of the "Ideas" of the *Phaedo*) in psychology, ethics, and natural theology should be brought more to the fore. This deficiency is supplied somewhat by a brief discussion of God and the Ideas in the volume which serves as a companion to this: *Plato: Phaedrus, Ion, Gorgias, and Symposium, with Passages from the Republic and Laws* (1938), p. xxxvi. The two volumes together form a scholarly contribution toward a better knowledge of a man who, more than any other, combined the qualities of poet and philosopher.

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